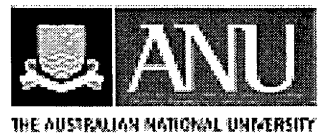

THE 'CIVILIZING MISSIONS' ON THE PERIPHERY?

CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS AGENCIES AND ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN CHINA

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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I declare that this thesis is my own original work
and all sources have been acknowledged.

廣野 美和

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04 July 2006

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AV	Administrative Village
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCPCC	Chinese Communist Party Central Committee
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIM	China Inland Mission
CO	community organization
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
FBIS	*Foreign Broadcast Information Service*
FSC	Friends' Service Council
GONGO	government-organized non-governmental organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICEC	International Cultural Exchange Centre
IHQ	international headquarter
JHF	Jian Hua Foundation
MFN	Most Favoured Nation
ND	no date
NGO	non-governmental organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
Novib	*Nederlandse Organisatie voor Internationale Bijstand* (Oxfam Netherlands)
NV	Natural Village
Oxfam HK	Oxfam Hong Kong
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRC	People's Republic of China
RAB	Religious Affairs Bureau
SAFEA	State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs
TSPM	Three Self Patriotic Movements
UFWD	United Front Work Department
US	United States
UK	United Kingdom

UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VC	Villagers' Committee
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

GLOSSARY OF CHINESE TERMS

This thesis uses *pinyin* romanization throughout, with the exception of some place names and personal names that have been long familiar in the West, or difficult to recognize in pinyin. For the sake of consistency, original sources in Cantonese are also cited by using *pinyin*. When Chinese sources from the pre-communist period, or sources published in Hong Kong are cited, it uses the complicated (*fantizi* 繁体字) style characters. Otherwise, this thesis uses simplified characters (*jiantizi* 简体字), the official character sets of the People's Republic of China. Some Chinese terms, such as *suzhi* (素质), rendered here as human quality, are not easily translated into English. By the same token, some English terms, such as 'civilization', are not easily translated into Chinese, and can have three different meanings, such as *jiaohua* (教化), *shu* (熟) or *wenming* (文明) (Chapter One will discuss these differences in further detail). In such cases, I use the Chinese terms as they appear in the source text. With regard to Chinese and Japanese names, the text follows the Chinese and Japanese practice of placing family names first (Deng Xiaoping, Fukuzawa Yukichi) except for Westerners, Asian Americans, and citations to Asian authors who adopt Western name order when publishing in English (Immanuel Hsü, Takeshi Hamashita). The Chinese terms this thesis uses (except those terms in longer quotations, Table 1.1 and bibliography) are as follows:

***pinyin* romanization**	**Chinese terms**	**English translation**
ai guo ai jiao	爱国爱教	love-country love-church
dou du	都督	governors
fan bu	藩部	vassals
fu pin ban	扶贫办	poverty alleviation office
gai tu gui liu	改土归流	direct governance by the appointment of Chinese magistrates
guo ji fei zheng fu zu zhi	国际非政府组织	international NGO
guo jia min zu shi wu wei yuan hui	国家民族事务委员会	the State Ethnic Affairs Committee of the PRC
guo zu	国族	national citizenry

hua feng	华风	The Chinese way
hu shi	互市	markets trading with minority nationalities or foreign countries
nei di	内地	inner land
Jian Hua	建华	to build China; 'Jian Hua' Foundation
jiao hua	教化	transformation by education
Jiu Shi Jün	救世军	The Salvation Army
li	礼	ceremony
Li Fan Yuan	理藩院	The Office of Border Affairs
luo huo	落后	backward
Meng Zang Yuan	蒙藏院	The Office of Mongol and Tibetan Affairs
min jian zu zhi	民间组织	people's organization; NGO
min zu shi bie gong zuo	民族识别工作	ethnic identification project
min zu qü yü zi zhi zhi du	民族区域自治制度	national regional autonomy
san min zhu yi	三民主义	the three principles of people
san zi yün Dong	三自运动	the three-self movement
su zhi	素质	human quality
shao shu minzu	少数民族	minority nationality system
sheng chan dui	生産隊	production team
sheng fan	生藩	uncivilized barbarians
she qü	社区	community
she qü guan li wei yuan hui	社区管理委员会	community management committee
Shi men kan	石门坎	Stone Gateway
Shi Wu Bao	事務報	*Shiwubao*; a periodical publication from 1896 to 1898
shü	熟	cooked
shü fan	熟藩	civilized barbarians
Tian zi	天子	the Son of Heaven (Chinese

		emperor)
Tong Yi Zhan Xian Gong Zuo Bu		
	统一战线工作部	the United Front Work Department (UFWD)
chao gong guo	朝贡国	tributary states
tu mu	土目	chieftainship
tu si	土司	administration by native chiefs
wen ming	文明	civilization
wu zu gong he	五族共和	The Republic of Five
Xiao Jin	孝经	The Book of Filial Piety
xi bu da kai fa	西部大开发	Great West Development Program
yi di	夷狄	barbarians
yi min shi bian	移民实边	sending migrants forcefully to
you hui zheng ce	优惠政策	Preferential policies
Zhong Guo	中国	the middle kingdom; China
Zhong Hua Jiu Shi Jün	中華救世軍	The Chinese Salvation Army
Zhong hua min zu	中华民族	Chinese nation
Zong Jiao Shi Wu Jü	宗教事务局	the Religious Affairs Bureau

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the encounter between international religious agencies and ethnic minorities in China's south-western periphery. It critically assesses the idea of a Christian 'civilizing mission' through a comparative analysis of Christian missionaries in the early twentieth century and international Christian NGOs in the contemporary era. Despite their obvious differences, both missionaries and Christian NGOs share a belief in universal or absolute values that they promote in communities with diverse traditions. The successful promotion of these beliefs requires international religious agencies to establish a dialogue with communities, especially through demonstrations of respect for different ethnic values and beliefs. This thesis traces these encounters.

This thesis has four objectives. First, it brings together historical and contemporary accounts of change and continuity in the Christian 'civilizing mission'. Second, it explores the entangled relationship between the concept of a 'civilizing mission' and religion. Third, it develops a deeper understanding of the Christian 'civilizing mission' from a local non-state perspective. Fourth, it assesses the impact of international religious agencies on ethnic community identity in the past and present. It does so by drawing, in part, from archival material and, for the contemporary setting, original fieldwork in Yunnan and Qinghai provinces. Through these four objectives, the thesis contributes to the work on religion in China in the late-nineteenth century, brings a much needed religious dimension to the literature on China's contemporary international relations, and, finally, improves our understanding on the extent to which China has rejected or adopted 'Western' or 'universal' values.

In interpreting the encounter between international religious agencies and ethnic communities, the thesis posits three frames of interaction—'conflict', 'adaptation' and 'middle ground'. The conflict and adaptation frames refer to the extent to which members of an ethnic community consciously agree with the values, beliefs and activities of an international religious agency. The middle ground frame refers to a situation in which interaction results in unintended consequences for both the international religious agency and the ethnic community.

This thesis argues that the idea of a 'civilizing mission' as the imposition of values and beliefs is too simplistic, not the least because it tells us little about how ethnic communities respond to 'Western' or 'universal' values. To assume the imposition of values and beliefs overlooks the dialogue between international religious agencies and ethnic communities that allows us to understand the fine line between

conflict or adaptation. It also discounts the possibility of unintended consequences that may strengthen community identity. This thesis demonstrates that the introduction of external religious values and beliefs need not weaken ethnic community identity.

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The path to completion of this PhD thesis has been a wonderful journey. I have received so much advice and encouragement, energy and confidence from so many people. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to all, many of whom have become what I hope will turn out to be life-long friends.

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Miwa Hirono
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INTRODUCTION

'Take up the White Man's Burden –
Send forth the best ye breed –
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness
On fluttered folk and wild –
Your new-caught, sullen people, half devil and half child'.
(Rudyard Kipling, 'The White Man's Burden' 1899)

This verse, written by the British poet Rudyard Kipling, was published at the time of the Philippine-American war (1899-1913). 'The White Man's Burden' justified an imperialist project, and supported the position that the United States should join forces with British imperialism and share the 'white man's burden' of 'extending civilization to peoples considered incapable of governing themselves' (Zwick 1992: xviii). In other words, the United States should join in the 'civilizing mission'. More than a century has passed since this poem was published, but it is still cited in many contemporary works to suggest the continuing relevance of the idea of the 'civilizing mission' over time (Bowden 2004a; Foster, Magdoff and McChesney 2004; Sines 2002).

Edward Said (1994: 130) writes that the rhetoric of the civilizing mission is 'what has been called "a duty" to natives, the requirement in Africa and elsewhere to establish colonies for the "benefit" of the natives, or for the "prestige" of the mother country'. What is evident from both Kipling and Said's description is that the idea of the 'civilizing mission' has embedded within it two key presuppositions: an asymmetrical image of the relationship between so-called 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' people; and a self-proclaimed sense of duty of the 'civilized' to help the 'uncivilized'.

According to many historians, in the nineteenth century the 'civilizing mission' was inextricably linked to imperialism through the work of (especially British and French) Christian missionaries (Wiest 1997; Dubois 2005; Fischer-Tiné and Mann 2004). For example, Wiest (1997: 668) states that the French government and French missionaries 'collaborated in combining the two notions of *Gesta Dei per Francos* ['The Deeds of God Through the Franks'] and *Mission Civilisatrice* ['Civilizing Mission']'. From a nineteenth century French perspective, Christian missionaries saw themselves as undertaking a 'civilizing mission' that aimed not only to evangelize but also to facilitate French colonial and economic expansion.

Even though the nineteenth-century style of imperialism no longer prevails, the theme of the 'civilizing mission' is still commonly referred to in the field of contemporary international relations. (Donnelly 1998; Gong 1984a, 1984b; Seabrooke and Bowden 2006; Wight 1991). A number of writings in the field of development studies has also suggested that a new form of 'civilizing mission' is emerging through the activities of development agencies (Biccum 2005; Cooke and Kothari 2001; Manji and O'Coill 2002; Marglin 2003; Mosse 2004). These studies have heavily criticized international NGOs, many of which are in fact religious, for their 'civilizing' agenda.[1] Very often the idea of the 'civilizing mission' is implicit in the emphasis on the asymmetrical relationship between the 'developer' and local people. As champions of development, so the argument goes, NGOs tend to spread their values and beliefs, based on a view of their own superiority, juxtaposed with a view of the inferiority of those on the receiving end. What is implied in this view is that attempts by external agencies to impart their values and beliefs to local communities can be understood as essentially seeking to raise the 'standard of civilization' of the 'uncivilized' to that of the 'civilized'.

These bodies of literature inherently assume a unidirectional imposition of values and beliefs with less attention given to the actual interactions between the so-called 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' (Biccum 2005; Donnelly 1998; Gong 1984a, 1984b; Manji and O'Coill 2000). Such local interactions have been investigated in the literature on China studies, which particularly deals with Christian missionaries in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, from the perspective of historical anthropology (Bays 1996; Cheung 1995; Harrell 1995; Sweeten 2001; Dunch 2001). Some of these studies focus on ethnic communities as the targets of activity conducted by Christian missionaries (Cheung 1995; Harrell 1995). Few existing studies examine local interactions between international Christian NGOs and ethnic communities in China in the contemporary context, let alone undertake a comparative analysis of historical and contemporary encounters between international religious agencies and ethnic communities.[2]

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1 Such studies are critical of the commonly held assumption that a high degree of 'participation' by local people inevitably leads to their 'empowerment' (Chambers 1983, 1994; Arnstein 1969, Pretty 1995, Cornwall 1996).

2 A note of these terms, 'international religious agencies' and 'ethnic communities', is provided later in this introduction (see pp. 16-18). One of the reasons for the lack of historical comparison is the apparently significant changes in the way the Chinese government has dealt with Christianity over time. In particular, the PRC expelled Christian missionaries from the country in 1953. Since this time, foreign religious activity has been strictly controlled. However, despite these controls, since the late 1980s, international aid and development NGOs have been working in China, and many of them are either explicitly Christian in their orientation or affiliated with Christianity in some way.

This thesis accordingly provides an historically informed analysis of the interactions between international religious agencies and ethnic communities living in the south-western periphery of China. In comparing the work of Christian missionaries in the early twentieth century with that of international Christian NGOs in the contemporary era, it seeks to critically assess the idea of the Christian 'civilizing mission' over time. Although international Christian NGOs today and Christian missionaries in the historical period are in many ways very different, both groups have commonly believed in universal or absolute values, which they attempt to promote among communities with diverse traditions.

The lack of an historical comparative analysis hinders in-depth understanding of the relationship between the idea of the 'civilizing mission' and religion in China. The meaning of the term 'civilizing mission' is not fixed nor does it conform to a single interpretation. The term's connotations have fluctuated over time. In relation to the Christian missionaries of nineteenth century imperialism, the notion of a 'civilizing mission' often had a positive connotation, implicit in the image of Christian missionaries as 'a special breed of heroic persons bringing Christ to foreign lands' (Wiest 1997: 656). By contrast, describing today's international Christian NGOs as undertaking a 'civilizing mission' is considered to be very offensive and overly deterministic. This is because the 'civilizing mission' has been linked to the discredited concept of imperialism. Indeed, as will be explained later in this thesis, the extent to which international Christian NGOs today perceive their work in China as part of a 'civilizing mission' varies from organization to organization. By critically assessing the idea of the Christian 'civilizing mission' over time, this thesis aims to offer an explanation of how the relationship between the idea of the 'civilizing mission' and religion has transformed.

The thesis seeks to address two central research questions:

1. How have the interactions between international religious agencies and ethnic communities in China transformed from the nineteenth century to date?
2. What are the implications for our broader understanding of the changing nature of the Christian 'civilizing mission'?

In order to render these central questions more capable of empirical investigation, the thesis will focus on the following sub-research questions.

1. How have international religious agencies put their values and beliefs into practice in the process of interacting with local ethnic communities on China's periphery?

2. How have ethnic communities responded to those externally generated values and beliefs?
3. What has been the impact on any pre-existing notions of community identity?

China's Civilizational Encounter with the West: Conflict or Adaptation?

This thesis speaks to a broader theme of China's civilizational encounter with the West. The general literature on the idea of a civilizational encounter discusses ways in which civilizations intersect with each other at a conceptual level (Weber [1922] 1964; Durkheim and Mauss ([1930] 1971); Febvre ([1930] 1973); Nelson [1973] 1981; Elias ([1939] 1989); Arnason 2001; Rundell and Mennell 1998; Huntington 1993, 1996).[3] A central debate revolves around the question of whether the civilizational encounter leads to a 'clash' or to an 'adaptation' (Huntington 1993, 1996; Nelson [1973] 1981). Those who concentrate on a 'clash', for example Huntington (1996), tend to emphasize civilizational differences, and argue that a contest for power is occurring in an intercivilizational context.[4] In contrast, other scholars have emphasized civilizational exchange and the potential for adaptation.[5] For example, Benjamin Nelson ([1973] 1981) explores the critical borrowings of Western Christendom from the Muslim and Hebrew civilizations. Much sociological and international relations literature draws on Nelson's idea of 'civilizational borrowing'. Arjomond (2001: 455), for example, argues that the normative order of medieval Islam was based on pluralism 'through the mutual accommodation of the *shari`a* and a political culture derived from Greek and Perso-Indian sources'.

The literature dealing with the civilizational encounter in a broader sense focuses on the importance of religion (Madsen and Strong 2002; Chambers and Kymlicka 2002; Anhelm 1999; AnNa'im 2002; Keane 2002; Thomas 2004). Madsen and Strong's (2002) edited book on ethical pluralism 'juxtaposes modern secular philosophical

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3 With regard to Nelson's analysis on Max Weber's 'civilizational-analytic perspective', see Nelson (1976, 1981). The majority of international relations writings on civilization in fact draw on the literature of sociology, and the study itself of civilization is inter-disciplinary today. Recent momentum for the revival of civilization in international relations and sociology stems in some part from Huntington's 'The Clash of Civilizations' thesis (1993, 1996). Recently, two journals have dedicated space to a discussion of civilization: *Thesis Eleven,* Vol. 62, No. 1 (August 2000) and *International Sociology,* Vol. 16, No. 3 (September 2001). In the field of international relations, civilization has received increased attention since the 1990s. Representative studies are O'Hagan (2002), Neumann (1999) and Salter (2002).

4 With regard to the development of literature on the concept of civilizations after Huntington, see O'Hagan (2005).

5 Literature that deals with dialogue within and among civilizations is increasing; for example, see Khatami (2003) and Koechler (2003). For a review of traditional approaches to civilization in sociology, see Arnason (2001).

traditions with older religious traditions' (Madsen and Strong 2002: 1). Its concluding chapter identifies the possibility of dialogues across different traditions, by arguing that 'there are important areas of overlap, and important ways in which they are mutually compatible' (Moon 2002: 357). It is important that this argument takes place because religion is often understood as having an exclusive nature (AnNa'im 2002). My thesis is motivated by Madsen and Strong's discussion at the conceptual level, and explores the condition and the nature of dialogue in the encounter between international religious agencies and ethnic communities in China from an empirical point of view.

In a similar vein to that in the general literature, scholars studying civilizational encounters between nineteenth-century China and the West have also stressed that such encounters led to either a clash or an adaptation. Many studies have identified the political, economic and cultural differences between China and the West, and have discussed how conflicts between the two, which began with the 1840 Opium War, have transformed China since the nineteenth century (Fairbank 1968; Cohen 1984; Banno 1964). Other scholars have stressed the importance of adaptation in their exploration of the process by which China attempted to adapt to a European standard of civilization during the nineteenth century (Gong 1984a, 1984b; Zhang 1991; Suzuki 2005).

In the contemporary era, normative tensions between China and the West remain an important focus of scholarly concern (Bell 1996, 2000; Foot 2000; Kent 1999; Nathan 2003; Shambaugh 2000; Zhang 1998). The term 'civilizational encounter' is not necessarily used in these studies, but the essence of the debate over the so-called 'international socialization' of China lies in how China resists or adapts to externally originated values. For example, the issue of human rights clearly raises the subject of civilizational clash or adaptation. Some scholars focus on China's disagreement with the so-called 'standard of human rights' set by the West (Bell 1996, 2000). Others emphasize China's adaptation of international human rights regime (Foot 2000; Kent 1999).[6] This thesis is situated in this very important debate by identifying a fine line by which externally originated values lead to conflict or adaptation in China's local communities.

A common feature of the above-mentioned studies is that they take an elitist approach centring on the responses of governments and intellectuals, with far less attention given to the role of international non-state actors and the importance of

[6] In this regard, Foot (2000) and Kent (1999) provide representative studies from an international relations perspective. Foot (2000) explores the process of the diffusion of the international human rights norm in China and the importance of the notion of 'global community' to China. Kent (1999) investigates China's gradual socialization into the international human rights regime.

interactions taking place at the local level. Christian missionaries, for example, were significant actors in the age of European imperialism, and had a major impact on relations between China and several European countries. Throughout history and into the present, the influences of international agencies have been felt at multiple levels of Chinese society. Here, leading studies on China's international relations provide my study with useful approaches. Morton's study (2005) of international aid and China's environment is particularly valuable. It takes the important step of incorporating local dimensions into the study of China's international relations. In addition, Foot (2000), Hamrin (2003a) and Zweig (2002) incorporate analysis of non-state actors such as NGOs. My thesis, benefiting from these approaches, examines the local dimension with an emphasis on the role of non-state actors interacting in a religious context.

It is also necessary to acknowledge that the literature on China's international relations in the nineteenth century often portrays the important misconception that Western values are 'modern' and Chinese values are 'traditional' (Fairbank 1968; Cohen 1984; Hsü 1960; Pye 1966). The work of Lucian Pye (1966) is particularly illustrative in this regard. He argues that China's coastal areas, which have experienced greater foreign influence, have always been identified with 'modernity' by Chinese, while China's inland remains 'traditional'. However, the Western forces that tried to inculcate 'civilization' in China actually had a great deal to do with Christianity; and religion is usually associated with 'tradition', as opposed to 'modernity'. Dismissing these religious forces in order to more comfortably equate Western civilization with 'modernity' is highly problematic. In this thesis I seek to escape from the conventional, dichotomized paradigm that associates the West with 'modernity' and China with 'tradition'.

The idea of modifying this dichotomy is of particular relevance to an exploration of the idea of the 'civilizing mission' in the Chinese context. In focusing on the domestic realm, it is evident that neither the West nor some international regime is the sole entity from which a 'civilizing mission' has emanated. In fact, 'civilizing missions' have also originated in China. As Harrell (1995) reminds us, two types of 'civilizing mission' have occurred at the same time in China: one emanated from the West directed towards China; the other originated from the Chinese centre directed towards its periphery.[7] By addressing this interesting duality, this thesis firstly moves beyond the conventional paradigm of the West as a transmitter of 'civilization' and China as a

[7] Also see Oakes' (1995) discussion of 'internal colonialism' and Schein's (1997) discussion of 'internal orientalism' in a Chinese context.

passive recipient of 'civilization'. It secondly provides useful insights into the extent to which China's encounter with the West has affected the Chinese understanding of the concept of 'civilization'.

Central Objectives

This thesis has four main objectives. The first is to explore historical change and continuity in the Christian 'civilizing mission' aimed towards the Chinese periphery. As mentioned earlier, although the interactions between Christian missionaries and ethnic communities have been explored in the field of China studies (Harrell 1995; Chiao and Tapp 1989), very few studies have brought together historical and contemporary accounts. According to Harrell (1995), throughout history, 'civilizing missions' in China have been undertaken in a manner suggesting the 'civilizers' thought their own values and beliefs were superior to those of the 'civilizees', whose values and beliefs *ipso facto* were somehow inferior.[8] Since the nineteenth century, ethnic communities in China have been the common target of 'civilizing' activities undertaken not only by the West, by also by the Chinese centre (Harrell 1995). Although the thesis is primarily concerned with understanding the changing nature of the Christian 'civilizing mission' in China, it will also provide a contextual overview of the Chinese centre's 'civilizing mission' from the nineteenth century onwards. In so doing, it will explain the way in which China's encounter with the West affected the Chinese understanding of 'civilization'.

The second objective of this thesis is to incorporate a religious dimension into the literature on China's international relations by exploring the entangled relationship between the 'civilizing mission' and religion. Despite the fact that religion has been very important in China's encounter with the West, not only in the historical period but also in the contemporary period, it has been largely neglected in the literature. This is because the majority of the literature has focused on state actors. In this thesis a focus on religious non-state actors allows for a broader assessment of the extent to which the religious factor has affected China's encounter with the West.

The third objective is to gain a more nuanced understanding of the Christian 'civilizing missions' in China from a local perspective.[9] Such a perspective provides

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[8] Harrell (1995) in fact uses the term 'civilizing project', rather than 'civilizing mission'.

[9] The main focus is on the interaction between international religious agencies and ethnic communities in China, although the study also takes into account the importance of the Chinese central and local governments when and where appropriate. During the Maoist era, the Chinese central and local governments were deeply enmeshed in ethnic communities, a fact that has left an indelible mark on

deeper insights into the major debate over the extent to which 'Western values' or so-called 'universal values' have been rejected or adapted at various levels of Chinese society. In order to provide an in-depth account of the relationship between external agencies and the communities they affect, it is essential to bring in the responses of local people who are often less vocal than national elites. Focusing on local people is important because very often they are the so-called direct 'recipients' of externally driven values and beliefs.

The fourth objective is to assess the impact of international religious agencies on ethnic community identity. By 'ethnic community identity', as Chapter One will discuss in further detail, I mean the social boundary of a community at which its people distinguish 'us' from 'them'. Such boundaries can be observed in forms of social hierarchy and social practices. In many ethnic communities, community members feel a sense of belonging to the community based on social hierarchies embedded in religious affiliation and traditional social relations (Madsen 1998; Harrell 1995: Gladney 1991). The impact of both Western 'civilizing' activities and those of the Chinese centre during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in relation to the ethnic identity of non-Han communities on the Chinese periphery, has been discussed in anthropological studies such as Harrell (1995), Cheung (1995) and Diamond (1995). These scholars argue that 'civilizing projects' undertaken by both Christian missionaries and the Chinese centre contributed to developing 'ethnic consciousness' among ethnic communities (Harrell 1995: 27-29). This thesis heavily draws on these insights, and brings into the discussion the impact of international religious NGOs in the contemporary period.

In pursuit of these four objectives, this thesis brings together four main areas of scholarship. First, it draws on the literature on the transformation of state-ethnic minority relations from the late nineteenth century to date (Blum 2001; Chiao and Tapp 1989; Gladney 1991; Harrell 1995; Kaup 2000; Shi 2000).[10] In particular, I draw on anthropological and sociological works that have investigated various interactions at the local level.

Second, it draws on the literature relating to religion in China (Bays 2001; Dean 1998; Dunch 2001; Jing 1996; Madsen 1998, 2003a, 2003b; Yang 1973). Religion plays

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the collective consciousness of the communities. In addition, the activities of NGOs are controlled and have to be approved by both the central and local governments.

[10] Before these studies emerged, most literature on China's state-ethnic minority relations offered a state-centric view, by looking at how the state has intervened in minority affairs, and how, *by state*

a key role in 'ethnic community identity'. For example, in his study on China's Catholics, Richard Madsen (1998: 53-56) describes rural Catholicism as 'ethnicity'.[11] Drawing on Emile Durkheim, Madsen writes that the Catholic faith is 'vitally important as a sacred marker of the community's identity in relation to other communities' (1998: 136). In a similar vein, Yang (1973) analyzes the secular role of religion in Chinese society. He argues that the role of religion in China is deeply intertwined with informal social institution, such as lineage. These studies closely relate to the nature of China's civil society and provide this thesis with a foundation for its exploration of religiously-oriented ethnic communities.

Third, the thesis draws on a variety of works from the field of development studies, especially the literature on community development (Cooke and Kothari 2001; Mosse 2004; Shore and Wright 1997; Ferguson 1994; Tsing 1993; Scott 1998; Williams 2004; Gomm 1993; Kapoor 2002).[12] These critical studies are particularly helpful in discussing the 'civilizing' aspect of community development in relation to the notion of 'participation' as well as motivations and activities of international religious NGOs in the contemporary era.

Finally, this thesis draws on the literature on NGOs and civil society in China (Brook and Frolic 1997; Hamrin 2003b; Ma 2002a, 2002b; Madsen 1998; White, Howell and Shang 1996). An understanding of the constraints and characteristics of Chinese civil society is helpful in providing a backdrop against which one can assess the extent to which civil society organizations (both secular and religious) can play an autonomous role in representing social interests—autonomous in relation to the state, that is.[13]

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intervention, the peoples on China's border regions have been transformed from 'barbarians' into China's 'ethnic minorities' (Dreyer 1976; Heberer 1989; Mackerras 1994).

[11] Gladney (1991) also discusses the important close relationship between ethnicity and religion, by examining the Chinese categorization of the Hui (Muslim) community as an ethnic group.

[12] These studies argue that development is the locus for developers to exercise Foucault's notion of 'governmentality', reproducing hierarchies of relationship in knowledge (scientific over indigenous), in development (developer over 'to be developed'), in marginality (centre over margin) and in civilization (civilizer over civilizees). As Ferguson (1994) claims, such hierarchies are 'depoliticized' and seen as being quite natural. For the relationship between development and a 'new form of imperialism', see Biccum (2005).

[13] The question of whether 'civil society' can exist in China at all has been discussed also from historical and cultural points of view. With regard to the discussion on 'civil society' with Chinese characteristics, see a special issue on China's civil society in *Modern China*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (April 1993), Brook and Frolic (1997), Chamberlain (1998), Madsen (1998) and Pye (2001).

Research Methodology

Dual Comparative Approach: Historical and Contemporary

This study adopts a dual comparative approach to understanding the nature of the Christian 'civilizing mission' in China. Firstly, it will compare today's international religious NGOs with their historical counterparts, the Christian missionaries of the early twentieth century. The purpose of this historical comparison is to gain insights into changes and continuities in the interactions between international religious agencies and China's ethnic communities over time. Exploring such interactions over time will yield a more nuanced and deeper understanding of the 'civilizing mission' than has hitherto appeared in the literature.

These interactions in both the historical and contemporary eras will be interpreted by means of an analytical framework consisting of three frames—conflict, adaptation, and middle ground. These frames represent the different kinds of responses by ethnic communities to the values, beliefs and activities of international religious agencies, and the different kinds of impact such values, beliefs and activities have on ethnic communities. The conflict frame refers to an interaction in which members of an ethnic community consciously disagree with the values, beliefs and activities of an international religious agency (Scott 1990), and the adaptation frame refers to an interaction in which the two parties reach a consensus that leads to the adaptation of external values, beliefs and activity by the ethnic community. The middle ground frame does *not* refer to something between the conflict and adaptation frames. Rather, it refers to an interaction which results in something new or something unexpected (White 1995). Such interaction often leads to a strengthening of ethnic community identity (Harrell 1995; Cheung 1995; Diamond 1995; Tapp 1989). These three frames are not intended to be mutually exclusive. Instead, as will become clear throughout the thesis, each frame is complex, and the borders between the frames are porous rather than clear-cut. These frames will be used to distinguish three kinds of interaction, and to eventually analyze similarity in interactions that commonly reflect the features of a particular frame. Such similarity will help us to explore the conditions under which a particular frame of interaction occurs.

Secondly, in the contemporary era, this study compares three NGOs in separate case studies. The key variance across all three NGOs is the degree to which they are committed to evangelism. *The New Shorter Oxford Dictionary* defines evangelism as

'the preaching or promulgation of the Gospel; performance of the function of an evangelist' (Brown 1993: 863). In practical terms, this definition seems problematic as far as China is concerned because the preaching of the gospel is prohibited in that country. Furthermore, it is extremely difficult to measure the degree to which NGOs are committed to evangelism, and to do so requires in-depth investigation.[14] The degree to which NGOs are committed to evangelism is assessed on the basis of *the beliefs of individual personnel working for the NGOs*.[15] As will be explored more fully in the empirical chapters, individual personnel in these NGOs have their own particular views on the importance of evangelism to their work, and these subjective interpretations are a critical aspect of any assessment of the nature of religious commitment.

On the basis of the above key variance, the Jian Hua Foundation (JHF) has been selected here as an example of an NGO working on the basis of a strong degree of evangelism. In contrast, The Salvation Army is posited as an example of a mid-range degree. All of the board members and 'associates' of the JHF, except those employed locally, strongly emphasize Christian evangelism. In contrast, individual personnel of The Salvation Army tend to take a more liberal view of cross-religious issues.

Oxfam Hong Kong has been selected as an example of an NGO having the lowest degree of evangelism. Oxfam Hong Kong was selected as the third case study from among many international secular NGOs working in China.[16] Oxfam Hong Kong undertakes development activity based on a clear statement of the secular values, which it seeks to promote in China. This case study, therefore, provides a benchmark against which to gauge the extent to which religious NGOs secularize their values and beliefs within politically sensitive contexts such as China. The fact that Oxfam Hong Kong is committed to undertaking advocacy as well as developmental work is also highly relevant to this thesis, because advocacy is intricately linked to an NGO's values and beliefs. The case study of a secular NGO was initially selected as a control case but the religious-secular perspective turned out to be very important. The inclusion of a secular NGO further provides an opportunity to highlight differences or similarities in the way

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14 Berger (2003) also suggests that characteristics of religious NGOs can be determined by a complex set of analyses of such things as its self-identity, structure, financing and output, among others.

15 I choose 'individual' belief, rather than an 'organizational' one. Individual values and organizational values, the latter presented particularly in the form of the organizational constitution for example, are sometimes different. Looking at organizational values can possibly cause misrepresentation of the essence of an organization. Some organizations, for example the JHF, secularize their constitution so that the organization is more acceptable in the current Chinese communist system.

16 Oxfam has Quaker origins, and as will be explored later, Quakerism and secularism are intricately connected. From this point of view, evangelism and secularism should not be completely dichotomized. Rather, they should be understood as lying at two ends of an evangelism-secularism spectrum.

in which religious and secular NGOs put their values and beliefs into practice, while avoiding the pitfall of making too sharp a distinction between the development work of religious and secular NGOs.

In the context of mainland China, all the case study NGOs are involved in community development projects among ethnic communities living on China's periphery. In order to observe the impact of such projects, I selected NGOs that had just completed community development projects at the time of my fieldwork investigation in China in November 2004. This thesis will highlight the differences and similarities among the three case study NGOs with respect to three broad themes: (1) the origins and nature of their values and beliefs; (2) the reformulation of their identity in mainland China; and (3) their interaction with ethnic communities.[17]

Research Methods

To investigate both historical and the contemporary periods, I conducted archival research as well as fieldwork. For the historical period, I conducted archival research in Beijing, Kunming, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Canberra, collecting both primary and secondary source materials. The three main themes explored included the history of the relationship between China's centre and ethnic communities, the activity of Christian missionaries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the history of one of my case study NGOs, The Salvation Army, which was established in 1865.[18] These historical materials were written in Chinese, English, and Japanese.

For the contemporary period, I conducted fieldwork in China for eight months in total during the period between September 2003 and December 2005. This involved visits to NGO offices in mainland China and Hong Kong as well as visits to NGO development project sites in Yunnan and Qinghai Provinces, specifically Lancang County in Yunnan Province (the site of an Oxfam project) in November 2003; Zhaotong City in Yunnan Province (the site of a Salvation Army project); and Xibusha County in Qinghai Province (the site of a Jian Hua Foundation project) in November 2004. I also

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[17] The introduction to Part Two will explain each of these three broad themes, but it is important to briefly touch on the second theme here. The author does not assume that the case study NGOs reformulate their identity in mainland China. Rather, the main enquiry in relation to this theme is whether, and if so how, they reformulate their identity in mainland China.

[18] Other case study NGOs were established relatively recently, and written material on the process of the establishment of these NGOs is limited. Consequently, the history of these contemporary organizations was generated from the interviews.

made follow-up visits to representative offices of the Salvation Army and Oxfam in Australia in December 2005 and February 2006 respectively.[19]

Research into the case study NGOs and their projects was largely interview-based. I conducted a number of interviews with (1) NGO directors and staff members, both at their Hong Kong headquarters, at the Australian offices (except for JHF), and at their local project implementation offices; (2) villagers, both project participants and non-participants; and (3) local government officials.[20] In addition to the interviews, I used official and non-official documentary materials and project histories, as well as engaging in participant observation.

Interviews with NGO directors and staff members were semi-structured. Typical questions related to the NGO's view of a 'better world', the importance of Christianity in achieving such a world, the process involved in establishing an NGO in mainland China, the NGO's relationship with the Chinese government, its funding sources, and its international networks. Interviews with local government officials primarily sought their perception of international NGOs, and whether or not they, as government officials, had learnt anything from the approaches the NGOs were taking towards alleviating poverty among ethnic communities.

All the NGO projects I observed were in their final stages. I spent up to four days with NGO staff members at each project site, observing their interaction with the villagers and interviewing the villagers. I also engaged in participant observation, specifically in the villagers' houses, sharing meals with people involved in the NGO projects.[21] These included NGO staff members, local government officials, and ordinary villagers. This afforded me opportunities to observe typical activities on a day to day basis.

Interviews with the villagers were designed to gain an understanding of their perception of the projects undertaken by the international NGOs, of the values and beliefs espoused through the medium of project activity, and of the villagers' perceptions of their own community identity. Typical questions addressed how they learnt about the projects; why they participated (or did not participate) in the projects; what they learnt from the projects' training sessions; how they understood the nature of social relationships in their village; how they perceived other minorities living in the

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[19] JHF has liaison offices overseas, but does not have main offices, where major administration work is conducted.

[20] Unfortunately, at the time of my visit to one project site, the local government officials normally on-site happened to be out of the village.

same village; and how they perceived the religious and traditional leaders in their communities.

During my fieldwork visits to China and Hong Kong, the sensitivity of issues raised in researching material for the thesis became evident. The sensitivity mostly derived from anxiety over the precarious nature of their status in China. Such sensitivity hindered my research on church-based community development projects undertaken by international religious NGOs. In fact, some international religious NGOs working in China declined to allow me to carry out research into their projects because they were concerned about publicity ramifications.

My interviews with some government officials at the provincial level also revealed the sensitivity of the subject of NGOs. The Chinese term 'NGO', *fei zhengfu zuzhi* (非政府组织), is still new to the Chinese language, having first appeared in the 1990s.[22] In Chinese, as Ma notes, 'the word "fei" means "not", but also "wrong" or even "anti"' (2003). Therefore, the term 'NGO' can be interpreted to mean 'anti-government organization' (Ma 2003; Saich 2000: 124).[23] Some provincial government officials were highly suspicious of NGOs, believing that they supported the separatist movements of ethnic minority groups, particularly in Yunnan Province, where many ethnic minority groups exist.

Central Argument and Major Findings

By comparing the interactions at the turn of the twentieth century with those of the twenty-first century, this thesis reveals that international secular and religious agencies commonly believe in so-called 'universal values', which are supposed to help bring about something better. This view resonates with the idea of the 'civilizing mission' presented by Kipling and Said at the beginning of this introduction—an asymmetrical

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21 As these NGOs pay villagers for meals, these meals did not impose a financial burden on my local hosts.

22 In recent years, there has existed an official taxonomy of social organizations in China. *Fei zhengfu zuzhi* is not used by Chinese organizations; instead they use *minjian zuzhi*. Ma (2003) mentions that the term 'NGO' started to become more widely known after the 1995 Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing. 'To prepare Chinese women's organizations to understand the meaning and practice of *fei zhengfu zuzhi*, the All-China Women's Federation launched a campaign to train women leaders at all levels'. As a result of the campaign, most of the 1,910,000 women leaders and activists learnt the term *fei zhengfu zuzhi* for the first time.

23 The Chinese government's political restrictions in relation to, and nervousness about, foreign religious organizations may cause problems for religious NGOs. The problem in attaching a religious label to an NGO is by no means unique to China. Irrespective of whether it is in China or other parts of the world, from a practical point of view, many NGOs are reluctant 'to use the term "religion" in describing themselves and their activities' (Berger 2003: 17) because of 'the potentially negative connotations associated with religious references as well as legal obstacles that arise when applying for public funding' (Berger 2003: 17).

relationship between outsiders and ethnic communities. However, this does not necessarily mean that they impose their values devoid of any engagement. This thesis argues that a belief in universal values and a respect for difference through the process of a dialogue are not mutually exclusive.

When consideration is given to the response of ethnic communities to externally generated values, beliefs and activity, it becomes clear that the mode of interaction is critically important. As a means of assessing the 'civilizing' tendency, the extent to which international religious agencies are committed to evangelism through imposition of values and beliefs on ethnic communities is not sufficient. Rather, much depends on the extent to which both parties have engaged in an in-depth dialogue over values. Without such dialogue, the interaction between the two tends to fall into the conflict frame. It is in this frame that the idea of the 'civilizing mission' becomes a problem.

One of the more important findings in this regard is that the line between conflict and adaptation in the interactions between international religious agencies and ethnic communities during both periods is a fine one. As will be explained later in this thesis, much has depended on the way in which international religious agencies have selectively engaged with particular ethnic communities while downplaying other ethnic communities within the same village.

An important finding in relation to the religious-secular comparison is that among the three contemporary NGOs it was, perhaps paradoxically, Oxfam Hong Kong, a secular case study NGO, that made more of an effort to engage with religiously-oriented ethnic communities, even though such engagement was inconsistent with their secular values and beliefs. By contrast, a relative lack of engagement often existed between religious NGOs and religiously-oriented ethnic communities. There are two main reasons for this: firstly there is a high degree of political sensitivity associated with international religious NGOs' working with religiously-oriented ethnic communities in China, and secondly there are degrees of conflict between the different religious beliefs involved.

A major change between the historical and contemporary periods lies in the weakening of the religious impact on ethnic communities in China. This relates to the way in which today's international religious agencies present their religious values and beliefs. In the past, Christian missionaries espoused their particular religious values and beliefs in a more direct fashion, whereas today's Christian NGOs do so in more subtle ways. For example, they depend increasingly on the use of religious symbolism, on demonstration of the 'love of God' by way of helping ethnic communities, and on

modelling themselves on the practices and philosophy of Jesus Christ, without necessarily saying others should do so as well. Christian missionaries did these things as well, but the dependence on such tactics as a means of promoting religious values and beliefs has increased over time. This finding is not particularly surprising given the strict control by China's secular Communist government over the conduct of international religious NGOs. It is, however, important to acknowledge that these organizations still attempt to promote their religious values and beliefs among ethnic communities; but they do so in such a way that their activity conforms closely to Chinese government regulations.

These findings lead to the central argument of this thesis: the extent to which an international religious agency engages with ethnic communities is the key to gaining a more nuanced understanding of the idea of the 'civilizing mission' over time. Contrary to an underlying assumption in the literature, which argues for an understanding of the imposition of values as a way of assessing the nature of the 'civilizing mission', this thesis argues that one needs to look at the other side of the coin. In other words, we need to assess the 'civilizing mission' from the perspective of 'engagement'. Two issues are particularly important in this regard. First, even in the case where an international religious agency has 'imposed' its values and activities, these can be well received by ethnic communities. Second, and interrelated, a positive response from ethnic communities generated through a process of engagement can lead, in turn, to positive unintended consequences such as self-realization of the ethnic community. It is important to stress that the encounter with religion does not necessarily lead to a weakening of ethnic identity.

A Note on the Terms 'International Religious Agency' and 'Ethnic Community'

There is no consensus on the definition of a religious NGO in the development and civil society literatures. Hamrin (2003b) distinguishes a 'religious' NGO from one that is 'faith-based'. According to Hamrin, a religious organization is defined as a group that promote[s] the traditional activities of worship and prayer, religious sacraments, the teaching of the laity and training of clergy, proselytizing and the publication of sacred texts and other religious materials', whereas a faith-based organization is defined as a 'nonprofit [association] that [has] faith-based motivations, hiring policies, and funding sources, but that [does] not do "religious work" narrowly defined, but [offers] social services in other sectors such as education, health, or charitable work' (Hamrin 2003b).

This distinction between a religious NGO and a faith-based NGO is ambiguous because it is difficult to know exactly what constitutes 'religious work narrowly defined'. This is particularly so in the context of China. For example, evangelism, such as spreading the message of the gospels, can be understood as 'religious work narrowly defined'. However, as will become clear in the empirical chapters of this thesis, in actual practice, evangelism in China usually is undertaken in educational or health work. In fact, the key to discerning whether an organization is religious, faith-based or even secular is 'self-identity rather than an independent measure' (Berger 2003: 21). Even though a religious NGO has at its heart religious values and beliefs, the services it provides may vary from secular education to evangelization. How a religious NGO raises funds, and how it structures its relationship with church organizations and/or secular governments, varies from organization to organization. In short, it is extremely difficult to actually define 'religious work narrowly defined'; therefore, this thesis does not distinguish between 'faith-based' NGOs and 'religious' NGOs. Rather, it simply uses the term 'religious NGO'.

'NGO' is itself also a highly contested concept. Scholars concentrate on exploring the extent to which an NGO is, and should be, a *non*-governmental organization – an entity totally independent of a government or governments. In particular, the relationship between an authoritarian state and an NGO is a difficult one (Cleary 1997; Hawthorn 2001). In the Chinese context, Ma suggests that rather than analysing Chinese NGOs on the basis of Western concepts such as civil society and autonomy, we should take the more positive view of 'how much progress they have made so far in becoming a dynamic force outside of the state system' (2002a: 128).[24] Even though it is important to acknowledge the complexity of the term 'NGO', this thesis employs the term based on the fact that many international organizations on mainland China describe themselves as 'international NGOs'.[25]

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[24] China has a number of mass organizations (for example, the All-China Women's Federation), and so-called GONGOs (Government-Organized NGOs) (for example, the China Family Planning Association). Some studies argue the extent to which the GONGOs can play an important role in China's civil society (Ma 2002b; Wu 2003; Jackson, Chin and Huang 2005). For example, Wu (2003) argues that gradually GONGOs have become independent of the state from a funding point of view. Other scholars argue that 'NGOs' in general, are at risk of becoming mere service-utility providers; namely, sub-organizations of the government, because they lack sufficient autonomy to advocate for Chinese society, and to challenge the Chinese state (Unger and Chan 1995).

[25] One of the case studies of this thesis, The Salvation Army, actually claims to be an 'international movement' in the context outside mainland China. An 'international movement' is quite distinct from NGOs in discussion within the literature on transnational civil society (Khagram, Riker and Sikkink 2002). However, within mainland China, The Salvation Army identifies itself as an 'international NGO'.

In this study, the term 'international religious agency' refers both to Christian missionaries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and to international Christian NGOs today. I define an international religious agency as *being primarily associated with religious values and beliefs, operating on a non-profit basis to seek to bring about a better world by promoting its religious and secular values and beliefs across international borders.*[26] This definition is intentionally broad, reflecting the wide range of both religious and secular values, beliefs and activities that religious organizations provide. Consequently, religious values and beliefs need to be understood in relative rather than absolute terms.[27] Furthermore, the term 'international religious agency' also includes both an organization and an individual working for the organization. In an analysis of how an international agency interacts with an ethnic community, the individual values of the agency's representatives working at the village level are just as important as, if not more so than, the values of the organization to which they belong.

Meanwhile, 'ethnic community' in this thesis refers to a community that *includes* so-called 'minority nationality' populations, rather than to the minority populations alone. In many cases, 'minority nationalities' and Han Chinese coexist at project sites. Ethnically distinct communities may coexist in distinct relationship to one another, rather than becoming hybrid communities. In other words, communities usually exist in the plural, in multi-layered, overlapping ways, as will be explained in Chapter One. The term 'ethnic community' is used throughout this study, even though I deal with different historical periods and the notion of ethnicity in China has changed significantly over time.[28] This is simply to avoid confusion by changing terms based on different periods.

Significance of the Research

My study contributes to the existing literature in three important ways. The significance of this thesis in the first instance lies in the bottom-up perspective on China's encounter with the West. The bottom up approach casts a different light on the debate in the literature over whether China has rejected or adopted so-called 'universal values'. The debate is not very helpful to our understanding of the way a local community actually

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[26] This definition draws on Berger's (2003) definition of religious NGOs and Kilby's (2006) focus on NGOs as value-based entities that desire a 'better world'.

[27] The mixture of the religious and secular values is pointed out in some literature dealing with Christian missionaries. See, for example, Comaroff and Comaroff (1991) and Comaroff (1993).

[28] Some anthropological and historical studies use 'peripheral people' for the study of the period before the Communist era (Harrell 1995). The term 'minority nationality' has been used since the Communist state created the category in the 1950s (Gladney 1991; Kaup 2000).

perceives 'universal values'. Focusing on non-state actors—actual *people* rather than institutions—makes it possible to observe the situation in which China's local communities reject or adapt to 'universal values'. Put differently, this thesis provides a practical perspective on the theoretical discussion related to universalism and relativism in China's international relations. The bottom up approach also enables this study to emphasize the role of religion in the idea of the 'civilizing mission'. In the study of China's encounter with the West, the role of religion has been downplayed in the literature despite its importance.

Second, this study provides a more nuanced understanding of the 'civilizing mission'. As mentioned above, the literature assessing the idea of the 'civilizing mission' emphasizes the unidirectional imposition of the values of the 'civilized' on the 'uncivilized'. Less attention is given to the responses of those on the receiving end. Ethnic communities respond differently to various 'universal values' and the differences in response must be properly understood if one is to gain a fuller understanding of the idea of the relevance of the 'civilizing mission'.

Third, this thesis also makes an empirical contribution to the literature on China studies in two ways. First, it provides insight into change and continuity in ethnic communities in the process of modernization. In particular, even though international religious agencies can be seen as modernizing forces, the fact that interactions at the community level do not necessarily lead to a weakening of ethnic and/or religious identity provides important insights into the nature of the transformation of ethnic communities. This leads to the second contribution of this thesis in relation to the literature on China studies; that is, to bring the historical and contemporary periods together. Change and continuity in the transformation of China since its encounter with the West in the nineteenth century have been among the more important themes in this literature. However, research into such a broad theme is extremely difficult and very complex. By examining the interaction between international religious agencies and ethnic communities in both the historical and contemporary periods, this thesis is able to identify the broader changes and continuities in the context of the Christian 'civilizing mission' in China.

Thesis Overview

This thesis is divided into two parts. Part One examines the relevant theory and history. Part Two is a comparative analysis of three contemporary international NGOs in China.

Both parts are organized around the central theme of the interaction between international religious agencies and ethnic communities. The concluding remarks in each part will relate directly to the conclusion of this thesis, which compares both historical and contemporary eras and reflects on the changing nature of the 'civilizing mission' over time.

Part One consists of three chapters. Chapter One reviews the theoretical literature related to the idea of a 'civilizing mission' and discusses the concept of ethnic community. It also provides an analytical framework for interpreting the interactions between international religious agencies and ethnic communities in China.

Chapter Two provides an account of centre-ethnic community relations in late nineteenth and twentieth century China, with special attention given to the role of the Chinese centre as a civilizer of the periphery. This chapter examines how Western civilization, to which Christianity is intrinsic, has affected the Chinese understanding of civilization. It also looks at the way in which religion has been understood and interpreted in particular in relation to ethnic communities.

Chapter Three provides an historical account of Christian missionaries working among ethnic communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This chapter discusses the international political background of the Christian missions in China, as well as the diversity in the values and beliefs that the British missionaries attempted to promote. It presents a case study of a single missionary working in a village called Stone Gateway in Southwest China as a way of exploring the impact of 'mission activity' on ethnic community identity.

Part Two of this thesis, comprising Chapters Four, Five and Six, focuses on the 'civilizing mission' in the contemporary period. It provides an in-depth comparative analysis of the values, beliefs and activities of two international religious NGOs—the Jian Hua Foundation and The Salvation Army, and of an international secular NGO—Oxfam Hong Kong. Each case study is organized around the three broad themes of *the origins and nature of values and beliefs, the reformulation of identity in China, and interactions with ethnic communities.*

The conclusion of the thesis, reflecting on the empirical investigations, firstly provides an historical-contemporary comparison of the interaction between international religious agencies and ethnic communities and the impact of those interactions on ethnic community identity. To do so requires refining the frames of interaction presented in Chapter One. Secondly, it discusses the implications of the arguments for a broader understanding of the nature of the Christian civilizing mission in China.

CHAPTER ONE

'CIVILIZING MISSIONS' AND ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN CHINA: FRAMES OF INTERACTION

This chapter explores the two central concepts of this thesis, namely the 'civilizing mission' and 'ethnic community', and proposes an analytical framework for understanding the complex interaction between international religious agencies and ethnic communities in both the historical and contemporary periods.

The idea of a 'civilizing mission' has been used to describe the hierarchical nature of civilizational encounters across time. As Western imperialism heightened the level and scope of interaction between the West and non-Western countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the idea of a 'civilizing mission' rose to prominence. Today, the idea is still commonly referred to in the field of international relations (Donnelly 1998; Gong 1984a, 1984b; Seabrooke and Bowden 2006; Wight 1991). The idea of the 'civilizing mission' has also travelled across space. Works that have discussed the idea of a 'civilizing mission', for example Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), have tended to suggest that such a mission is essentially derived from the West, and has been aimed at non-Western people. However, 'civilizing missions' are not uniquely a product of the West. They have also occurred within China, deriving from China's centre and aimed at its periphery (Harrell 1995).

'Ethnic community' on China's periphery, as a second part of my focus, has often been the designated target of civilizing missions across time and space. This concept of 'ethnic community', however, is also a complex concept that requires unpacking. Much of the development literature tends to assume 'community' to be a pure and fundamental unit in which 'tradition' still remains (Walker 2001). However, most communities are not static and by no means immune to modernizing forces. It cannot be assumed that a community is a fixed entity. Instead, a community is a process of forming a social boundary as a result of interaction with others.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first draws on the broader literature on civilization, and discusses the Chinese notion of civilization in the context of China's early encounter with the West in the nineteenth century. This section then moves onto a discussion of what constitutes a 'civilizing mission'. The second section reviews the literature that deals with the concept of 'ethnic community', and defines it as the process of forming a social boundary within which the constituents of a community

imagine their identity and their sharing of social practices. Following on from the discussion in the first and second sections, the third section presents the analytical framework for the thesis, which provides a means of interpreting the responses of the members of 'ethnic communities' to the values and activity of international religious agencies.

Civilization and Its Meaning in the Chinese Context

What Is Civilization?

To begin exploring the concept of civilization, the fundamental distinction between unitary and pluralist conceptions of civilization provides a useful departure point (Fabvre [1930] 1973: 220; Arnason 2001; O'Hagan 2005).[1] The unitary conception of 'Civilization' (with a capital 'C') denotes *progress* in relation to the political, economic and social institutions and practices of a society. According to this interpretation, Civilization is a *single and universal* concept used to describe a teleological *process* through which individuals and groups became civilized (Bowden 2004b: 30).

The idea of a 'standard of civilization' is embedded in the unitary conception of 'Civilization', in which civilization is seen as having core values, namely the 'ingredients of [the] civilization', which all societies should aim to obtain in order to progress (Mill [1836] 1962: 52). In the idea of the 'standard of civilization' that dominated European discourse in the nineteenth century (Duara 2001; Gong 1984a, 1984b; Suzuki 2005), European civilization, as the universal form of civilization, had definitive characteristics such as (1) guaranteed basic rights, i.e. life, dignity, and property, rooted in the mores of Christendom; (2) an organised political bureaucracy; (3) adherence to generally accepted international law; (4) fulfilment of obligations under the international system by maintaining adequate and permanent avenues for diplomatic interchange and communication; and (5) conformity to accepted norms and practices, and the rejection of 'barbaric' practices such as suttee, polygamy, and slavery (Gong 1984a: 14-21). These characteristics were used to evaluate the degree to which a non-European society had progressed relative to the standard of European Civilization. If a non-European society did not contain these particular ingredients, it was regarded as 'uncivilized'. The idea of the 'standard of civilization' is not unheard of in the

[1] The distinction between the unitary and pluralist conceptions of civilization relates to the etymology of civilization in French and German languages. Bowden's (2004b) study traces the etymological origins of civilization in the French, English and German languages.

contemporary period; universal human rights, for example, can be thought of as part of the 'standard of civilization' today (Donnelly 1998).

In contrast, the pluralist conception of 'civilizations' refers to distinct cultural *entities* (Huntington 1993, 1996), and therefore is used to *define and differentiate* the characteristics of societies.[2] Benjamin Nelson's study on the civilizational encounter ([1973] 1981) is a representative example of this. In relation to this conception, Huntington and Nelson have focused respectively on the 'clash' or 'adaptation' of civilizations.

Although the pluralist concept is based on the understanding of civilizations as *entities* that have some degree of social closure, current studies taking the pluralist approach go beyond such an understanding to discuss the *processes* in which such entities are created, or the *relationships* between such entities (Starobinski 1993; Dabashi 2001; Jackson and Hall forthcoming 2007). For example, Dabashi (2001) takes the view that civilization does not exist by itself, but it is socially constructed as a result of interaction with others. Thus, it is important to explore how civilizational encounters affect the characteristics of a civilization.

Jackson and Hall's account of civilizational identity is helpful for conceptualizing civilizations in a balanced way. They argue that civilizational identity has to be foregrounded 'not because civilizations have some kind of cultural essence, but precisely because they *don't* actually have any such determinate essence but sometimes appear as though they [do]' (forthcoming 2007: 8). Drawing on this understanding, civilization should not be understood as a fixed entity, but rather as *a self-proclaimed identity*, which may change according to its context and circumstances (Starobinski 1993: 5), or as a result of interaction with others (Dabashi 2001).

Understanding civilization in this way is entirely relevant to the Chinese context. The Chinese interpretation of civilization changed significantly as a result of China's encounter with the West. The change is amply demonstrated in a concomitant change in the Chinese words used to describe 'civilization'. The next section focuses on the Chinese understanding of civilization and its ideology, and examines how the concept of China's civilization has changed over time.

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[2] Huntington defines a civilization as 'a culture writ large', or as 'the broadest cultural entity' (1996: 41, 43). A number of studies which also take the pluralist conception of 'civilization' criticize Huntington as essentialist, however, because he describes civilization as a 'billiard-ball'-type entity that contains a fixed set of values (Cox 2002; Delanty 2003; Mandalios 2003; Melleuish 2003). These critical studies instead regard civilization as an essentially porous and fluid entity—that is, a set of 'symbolic frontiers, not iron curtains' (Mandalios 2003: 74).

Jiaohua, Wenming and Civilization: The Origin of the Term in China

Nowadays, 'civilization' is usually rendered in Mandarin Chinese as *wenming* (文明), the literal meaning of which is 'enlightened by culture'. The term *wenming* began to appear in Chinese discourse as a neologism in the nineteenth century, when China encountered European imperialism. Before *wenming* was recognized as a term equivalent to the English word 'civilization' in the late nineteenth century, a variety of writings show that there existed at least a couple of Chinese words that represented the concept of 'civilization'.

One example is found in the writings of Guo Songtao (郭嵩燾) (1818-1891), who was the Chinese ambassador to Britain from 1876 to 1878. His diary, kept during his time spent in London and Paris, records his observations on the Western political system, society, and culture. From his writings it is possible to identify significant differences between many English and Chinese terms. He tended to write phonetic transcriptions of English words in Chinese characters in the absence of suitable words with equivalent Chinese meanings (Fang 1999; Sasaki 2000). For 'civilization' he used 色維來意斯得, read as 'se wei lai yi si de', the phonetic transcription of 'civilized'.[3] He explains the term 'civilized' in a diary entry dated 5 March 1878, as follows:

> The West calls the countries that have learnt and understood politics and culture 'civilized', and all countries in Europe are recognized as this. China, Turkey and Iran are called 'half-civilized'. This means they are partly cultured, and partly not African and Muslim countries are called 'barbarians', the way China uses the term *yidi* [author: *yidi* means barbarians: a derogatory name for so-called minority nationalities], and the West considers them as lacking culture. Before the three dynasties of Xia, Shang and Zhou, only China had culture (*jiaohua*). Therefore [others] must accept this. Like those capitals of Yaofu and Huangfu, everyone from afar has been called *yidi* by China. Since the Han period, Chinese culture (*jiaohua*) has been waning day by day; and all European countries have reached the stage that they are all in command of the heights of culture, customs and manners. They see China as barbarians, just as the three dynasties of Xia, Shang and Zhou at their peak saw *yidi*. There are no Chinese gentry who know the significance of this. How terrible! (Guo; cited in Fang 1999).
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> 蓋西洋言政教修明之國曰色維來意斯得，歐洲諸國皆名之。其餘中國及土耳其及波斯，曰哈甫色維來意斯得。哈甫者，譯言得半也；意謂一半有教化，一半無之。其名阿非利加諸回國曰巴爾比里安，猶中國夷狄之稱也，西洋謂之無教化。三代以前，獨中國有教化耳，故有要服、荒服之名，一皆遠之於中國而名曰夷狄。自漢以來，中國教化日益微滅；而政教風俗，歐洲各國及獨擅其勝。其視中國，亦猶三代盛時之視夷狄也。中國士大夫知此義者尚無其人，傷哉！

[3] This form of phonetic use of Chinese pictographs has no meaning beyond the representation of a sequence of sounds as they occur in the Chinese mind.

He clearly states that 'countries that learnt and understood politics and culture' are called 'civilized'. Instead of the term *wenming*, he uses *jiaohua* (教化) (transformed by education) to explain civilization. *An English-Chinese Dictionary* (英華辭典) published in 1866 also shows that *jiaohua* was in common use (Lobscheid 1866). Table 1.1 is a chart adapted from the dictionary, with an additional literal English translation of each Chinese character. This table shows that before the term *wenming* appeared in Chinese writing, Chinese words such as *jiaohua* and *shu* were used to explain the meaning of the English term 'civilization'.

Table 1.1: Civilization and *Jiaohua*

English	Chinese	Translation of Chinese words
Civilization, the act of civilizing	jiaohua zhe (教化者)	person who is transformed by education
	kaihua zhe (開化者)	person who develops culture
The state of being civilized	liwen zhe (禮文者)	person who knows ritual and customs
	tongwuli zhe (通物理者)	person who is familiar with laws of science
	guanli zhe (管物者)	engineer; person who understands the laws of science
Civilize, to reclaim from a savage state	jiaohua (教化)	transformed by education
	jiaoyi liyi (教以禮儀)	teach with ritual principles
	huayi liyi (化以禮儀)	transform with ritual principles
Civilize him:	jiaohua ju (教化渠(他))	transform him by education
	huazhi (化之)	transform
Civilized, reclaim from savage life and manners	jiaohua guo (教化過)	has been transformed by education
	shu (熟)	cooked; transformed by culture
Civilizer, one who civilizes	jiaohua zhe (教化者)	person who transforms by education
	kaihua zhe (開化者)	person who develops culture
	qihua zhe (啟化者)	person who enlightens
	jiaoli yizhe (教禮儀者)	person who educates in ritual principles
	huaren zhe (化人者)	person who transforms people

Source: Adopted from Lobscheid (1866); modified by author.

All of these meanings in the 1866 dictionary link 'civilization' to the idea of progress in learning cultural rituals, customs and laws of science through education. This can be interpreted as the unitary conception of 'Civilization', rather than the pluralist conception. Thus, as Chapter Two will further detail, *jiaohua* is used to evaluate different degrees of progress according to the Chinese understanding of civilization in the mid nineteenth century. This understanding was related to Confucian thought, which held that the emperor had superior morality, and that his task was to

'educate' people and lead them to righteousness and morality. One can argue that the Chinese understood the moral nature of authority as one of the components of civilization (Sasaki 2000: 122-23).

In short, it is wrong to assume that the Chinese language did not contain the concept of civilization before the nineteenth century simply because the term *wenming* did not exist. The terms *jiaohua* and *shu* were based on historical Sino-centric thought.

So how did the term *wenming* come into being? Some scholars (Ishikawa 1994) suggest that *wenming* was one of many Chinese neologisms 'imported' from the West.[4] Ishikawa (1994) claims that the direct origin of the term *wenming* lies in the Japanese term, *bunmei* (文明), made up of the same Chinese characters as the Chinese term *wenming*. According to Ishikawa (1994), Liang Qichao (梁启超) was influenced by the Japanese philosopher Fukuzawa Yukichi's (福澤諭吉) work *An Outline of Civilization* (*Bunmeiron no Gairyaku* 文明論之概略) (1931).[5]

Chinese governmental and opinion leaders, such as Liang Qichao at the turn of the century, conceptualized the concept of *wenming* in regard to the West as the centre of civilization. This concept is apparent, for example, in *Shiwubao* (時務報), a periodical publication established by a group of reformists including Wang Kangnian (汪康年) and Liang Qichao, and may be seen in comments such as:

> When I see London I see not just apples on a branch, but also a capital city of contemporary civilization (*wenming*) with a history of over two thousand years. On the one hand, there are lots of wonderful scenes in London. On the other, London has established underground railways. These are the amazing views of the

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4 Many neologisms were introduced into China at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, for example sovereignty, nation, ethnic, and mediation (Chiu 1970; Katō and Maruyama 1991; Liu 1995, 1999; Maruyama and Katō 1998). Although some of these terms appear in classics of a few thousand years ago, their meanings were 'new' at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries when China was increasingly exposed to Western political and social thought.

5 The term *bunmei* can be identified in the literature of seventeenth century Japan. In his writing, 'The True Facts concerning the Middle Kingdom' (Chūchō Jijitsu 中朝事実), Yamaga Sokō (山鹿素行) implies a Japan-centric worldview (antecedent to a Sino-centric worldview). In so doing, he uses the term *bunmei*. For example, '(Japan) has flourished with civilization, and the imperial line has never ended, and will never end' (文明をもって隆えて、皇統終に絶えず) (Yamaga 1939: 37-39) Another interesting example is his use of the term *Chūka bunmei* (中華文明). In Japanese, *Chūka* usually means China, but Yamaga, in his attempt to spread the Japan-centric worldview in his seventeenth century work, used *Chūka bunmei* to refer to a Japan-centric civilization (Yamaga 1939: 21).

Fukuzawa understood civilization as the result of progress through stages 'from barbarianism through semi-openness to civilization' (野蛮は半開に進み、半開は文明に進み), and understood the West to be the world's most civilized zone (1931). His formulation leaves no room for the coexistence of different civilization, but holds Western civilization up as the *ultimate* civilization (Yamamuro 2001). In exploring the Japanese understanding of civilization, an interesting translation of Henry Wheaton's *Elements of international Law* ([1866] 1936) reveals 'all civilized nations' translated as 'Christian countries' (*Yaso dōshū no Kuni* 耶蘇同宗ノ国). Maruyama and Katō (1998: 135) claim that Wheaton himself understood civilized nations as Christian nations.

civilization (*wenming*) of which Londoners are very proud (11 October 1896, p. 729).

餘之觀倫敦，亦不過枝上林禽之觀而已，蓋此地為近今文明之都府，然其歷世之久，二千餘年矣。且倫敦之勝境甚夥，或於一方，設地下鐵路，誇文明之奇觀。

Russia has about ten thousand people mainly engaged in agriculture, five hundred thousand people in fisheries: in other words, there are many Russians who do not know what civilization (*wenming*) is (1 December 1896, p. 1083).

俄以農為生業，約一萬萬人，以漁為生業，五十萬人。要之俄人不知文明爲何物者，亦甚夥也。

Min Yonghuan, the former Korean ambassador to Russia, has been to Europe and America.... The other day someone visited him. Min told his visitor that he had heard what people who visited Europe and America said, that he had thought it was not true, and that he believed only half of it. However, when Min himself visited those countries he realized he had been wrong, and regretted that he was like a frog in a well, which cannot be spoken to about the ocean. Foreign civilization (*wenming*), technology and art flourish, such as undeveloped countries cannot even dream of (1 December 1896, p. 1090).

朝鮮閔泳煥，曩為使俄大臣，遊歷歐美各邦。（中略）頃有人相訪，語之曰，余嘗聞游歐美者言，皆以爲虛誕，半不信服，及親歷諸邦，始知曩者之誤，轉悔井蛙不可語海也。外國文明，技藝與盛，實為未開陋邦所不能夢見。

The Japanese are engaged in adopting weapons of civilization (*wenming*), which amazes Europe and America. Their speed of reform also makes Europe and America feel a sense of awe. Now there are quite a lot of people who make everything from ships to arms to a legal system, and understand the principles involved. What they have completed for the last twenty years is that they have dispatched competent people to go together to Europe to enter schools there; they study languages and translate books; in some cases employ foreigners as teachers; and compile collections of regulations. The only thing they bothered about is difficulty in realising civilization, and for that reason, they have arrived at their present state of flourishing (11 December 1896, p. 1152).

日人嘗汲汲採文明之利器，實使歐美驚歎；而變革之疾速，亦使歐美生畏懼之念矣。於是乎今也自船艦炮槍，至法律制度，精通其神理者，蓋亦不尠。而其二十年來所施設，或簡派俊才，同往歐洲，入其學堂，或學其言語，譯其書籍，或聘外人為師，或編制法典，惟恐文明之難及，故致有今日之盛矣。

It is clear from the above quotes that the term *wenming* in these examples refers to 'Western civilization' with emphasis on Western culture, technology and a western legal system. As the term *jiaohua* transformed into the more recent *wenming*, it is clear that the Chinese notion of civilization had shifted towards that of 'Western civilization', with emphasis on Western culture and technology. In other words, the interpretation of what it meant to be 'civilized' also changed from possessing an understanding of the ritual, customs and laws of science to possessing an understanding of Western culture

and technology. To understand this shift, it is helpful to think of civilization as a process in which a self-proclaimed identity is constructed through social interaction.

However, *jiaohua* and *wenming* were similar to the extent that both terms denoted a universal and unitary sense of 'Civilization', and the progress of an inferior through education. Before its encounter with the West, and just as surprisingly after the encounter, the Chinese understood the term civilization in the singular sense that as a result of the shift of civilizing centre from China to the West, the West was the only 'Civilization'. Accordingly, in the eyes of Chinese elites, China seemed to have changed from the superior civilizing centre of the Confucian civilization to become an inferior actor in a world dominated by Western civilization.

Despite understanding universal and unitary civilization inherent in the expressions *jiaohua* and *wenming*, there were in fact two civilizational trajectories taking place at the same time; one from the West to China (to both China's centre and periphery), and the other from the Chinese centre to the periphery. The next section elaborates on the idea of the 'civilizing mission' that signified both trajectories.

The 'Civilizing Mission'

In unpacking the idea of the 'civilizing mission', the theoretical literature suggests two fundamental points that need to be taken into account. The first point is that the above discussion of the unitary and pluralist conceptions of civilization is useful in understanding the idea of the 'civilizing mission' at the theoretical level. The idea of the 'civilizing mission' is embedded in the unitary and universal conception of 'Civilization'. As Said (1994) suggests, this concept forms the basis of an asymmetrical understanding of the relationship between the 'civilized' and 'uncivilized'. 'Civilizing' is about a process involving the transfer of superior political, material, or social culture from the civilized to the uncivilized. Put differently, the 'civilizing mission' aims to bring a local community closer to universal 'Civilization' and to bring about the associated social practices embedded in such Civilization.

By way of an example, the core of the civilizational identity of Christian missionaries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is Christian morality. However, as Harrell (1995: 20) explains in referring to Christian missionaries, 'the mission enterprise sought to bring not only the Gospel, but the modern life of Christian nations – with all its advantages in health, technology, and science – to the peoples of China'. Medicine, technology, and science actually helped to establish the Christian

missionaries at a higher level of superiority (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). As chapter three details, various Christian missionaries sought to get involved with the mission of 'modernity' to varying degrees. The Christian missionaries used the religious variable to evaluate groups, and in their minds, the ethnic communities fared rather better than the Han in the rankings, especially in the moral ranking (Harrell 1995: 22). The honesty, simplicity, and hard work of the ethnic communities contrasted with a perception of the clever but sly, sneaky, and untrustworthy trading mentality of the Han.

The civilizational identity of the Chinese centre's 'civilizing mission' in the Qing period (1644-1911) was humanist and moral, and the centre of the civilizational identity was the Chinese emperor, as Chapter Two will describe in detail (Fairbank 1968; Hamashita 1997; Harrell 1995). In the Communist period (1949 to date) the civilizational identity has been modern and scientific. The Communist Party has been regarded as the centre of the civilizational identity, and its goal in relation to ethnic communities has been 'to bring them to a universal standard of progress of modernity' (Harrell 1995: 23).

The 'civilizing mission' is also clearly related to the pluralist conception of civilization in the sense that both the self-proclaimed identities of those who undertake the 'civilizing mission' as well as those on the receiving end are in part constructed through the process of interaction. The importance of interaction in constructing the self-proclaimed identities of those who undertake the 'civilizing mission' needs to be stressed, because it provides a theoretical backdrop against which to analyze the change in the way the Chinese centre's and Christian 'civilizing missions' have perceived their civilizational identity.

One thing that the Christian and Chinese 'civilizing missions' have shared in common is the goal of transforming 'ethnic communities', especially those on periphery. The perceived success of these missions largely relates to how the identity of these communities is understood. To arrive at a clearer conceptualization, the next section explores the theoretical literature relating to ethnic community identity.

The 'Community' Problematique

Community is a much favoured term, not only in academic discussion but also in the broader discourse on development aid. In academic discussion, 'the concept of community is seen as providing a conceptual and strategic counterpoint to statecraft and modernity' (Walker 2001). While the state provides only 'thin, formulaic,

simplifications' of the people within its territory (Scott 1998), the concept of community is often seen as something romantic, rich, traditional, honest, and humane. As noted by Rapport (1996: 117), it usually results in a 'positive evaluation and evocation'. There exist a variety of definitions of community that have changed over time. The term is often used to mean 'a bounded group of people, culturally homogeneous and resident in one locality' (Rapport 1996: 115). It has also been used to represent a togetherness with a past (Tönnies 1955), a contemporary behavioural commonality, political solidarity (ethnic, local, religious), or a utopian future (a rural idyll, a world order)' (Rapport 1996: 117). All of these various definitions emphasize some kind of value system.

Within development aid circles, 'community' is regarded as an essential target for development projects, based on the belief that by engaging with a community, aid can reach people in need in a more effective way, and thus circumvent the problem of 'corrupt states' (Larmour 1998). Even the World Bank, which has been heavily criticized by many commentators for its top-down neo-liberal approach to development, is now a keen promoter of community-driven development projects (World Bank 1996). However, the assumption underpinning much development aid that a village *is* or *should be* a community is questionable. In general, global development discourse tends to use the term 'community' uncritically, with the suggestion that community is a pure and fundamental unit, which has to be protected from government intervention.

In the Chinese context, the question of whether 'community' actually exists is a persistent one. We cannot assume from the outset that villagers have a shared sense of community. In fact, strong state control over every aspect of social life has had a huge impact upon the construction of community in China. During the Maoist era, the Communist government aimed to develop a communitarian system along Leninist-Marxist lines, in which difference in the value systems of different communities would eventually cease to exist, in accordance with Marxist theory (Connor 1984). Particularly during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), the Party attempted to destroy the ideology and traditions of ethnic communities. In essence, the communities were incorporated into the state. The commune, rather than community, was the basic unit of administration, production and social relations until the decollectivization of agriculture in the 1970s. Since the late 1980s, administrative and natural villages have been the basic units. Within this context, whether a community as a bounded group of people exists, and if so, how it does, become critical areas of inquiry.

However, the term 'community' is retained in this study for two reasons. First, exploring the concept of 'community' leads to consideration of some of the complexities in the value system/social relations of China's ethnic communities, which is the focal point of my analysis. It also leads me to locate my study in the broader debate within social theory on the transformation of traditional ethnic communities during the process of modernization. One might argue that 'village' is a more neutral concept than the term 'community', and that it might be better used to describe groups of people. However, village is a geographical concept, and is of less normative interest than community. The second reason is more practical. The projects conducted by international religious agencies target 'community building'. An important task for my study therefore is to examine what these international religious NGOs mean by *their* use of 'community'.

My following discussion of community is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the concept of community in social theory, mainly in regard to Tönnies' argument about *Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft* (community and society), and Durkheim's argument about mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. The second part looks at the question of 'ethnic' community from an anthropological perspective. Drawing on these theories and taking some examples from Chinese case studies, I argue that an ethnic community is not a fixed entity, but a process. Clearly, culture, language, tradition, gender and race are important to any consideration of community identity, but identity should be understood as a belief shared by the constituents of a community, rather than as a fixed concept. This belief, I argue, is constructed in the process of interacting with others.

What is 'Community'?

Sociological Perspectives

In his seminal study, *Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft* ([1886] 1955), Ferdinand Tönnies argued that the evolution of Western civilization was a transformation from *Gemeinschaft* (community) to *Gesellschaft* (society). *Gemeinschaft* is a social entity that is based on affection and homogeneity. The main examples in his work on *Gemeinschaft* include the family, village, nation, and church. These are areas where emotion, custom, tradition and faith matter, and self-interest is not a primary focus. He describes emotion as 'essential will', which human beings are born with, prior to

developing rationality. *Gesellschaft*, on the other hand, is characterized by self-interest, competition and negotiated accommodation. Tönnies takes the Hobbesian view (in fact he quotes Hobbes' *Leviathan* in his book) that the state is a product of rational contracts. Tönnies argues that *Gesellschaft* is a contractual social entity based on a variety of self-interests, and that people make institutions and laws as the products of social contracts. The essential nature of *Gesellschaft* is based on infidelity (lack of trust) among people, on rationality, and on calculation. Tönnies states that 'in the *Gemeinschaft* they remain essentially united in spite of all separating factors, whereas in the *Gesellschaft* they are essentially separated in spite of all uniting factors' (Tönnies [1866] 1955). What unites people in the *Gesellschaft* is 'arbitrary will' or the 'rational will' of individuals.

Emile Durkheim ([1893] 1972) constructs the ideal type of society hypothetically, and characterizes it as 'mechanical solidarity', cohesion within which is exclusively the result of resemblance. In other words, a society is 'an absolutely homogeneous mass, whose parts [are] not distinguished from one another, and which consequently [has] no structure' (Durkheim [1893] 1972: 141). In particular, religion is vitally important to creating such homogeneity (Durkheim 1972: 222, 224). Although this is merely a hypothetical construction, he mentions that 'lower societies, those which are closest to... [the] primitive stage, are formed by a simple repetition of aggregates of this [mechanical solidarity] kind' ([1893] 1972: 141)—as, for example, in the case of the Iroquois people of North America. In contrast, societies based on 'organic solidarity' 'are formed, not by the repetition of similar, homogeneous segments, but by a system of different organs each of which has a special role, and which are themselves formed of differentiated parts' ([1893] 1972: 143).

One of the differentiators of 'mechanical solidarity' from 'organic solidarity' is what Durkheim calls the 'conscience collective'. In his analysis, the conscience collective and the individual mind are opposite concepts. When specialized activities have developed, it is 'probable that, in each individual mind, the personal sphere has grown more than the conscience collective' ([1893] 1972: 145). To paraphrase, when the conscience collective becomes weaker, weakening of mechanical solidarity also occurs, and a society tends towards organic solidarity.

The arguments of Tönnies and Durkheim provide this thesis with a lens to identify a variety of communities in a village on China's periphery. Although Deng Xiaoping's 'socialist market economy' enmeshed rural ethnic communities in 'a network of market relations centered on cities and towns', China's rural communities, particularly those with their own religion, reflect homogenous characteristics of *Gemeinschaft* or

'mechanical solidarity' (Madsen 1998: 137). However, the question of how the interaction between any particular community and outsiders changes the fundamental characteristics of the community remains unanswered in the arguments of Tönnies and Durkheim. For a possible answer we need to turn our attention to the work of anthropologists.

Anthropological Perspectives

Simply put, in anthropology (including ethnic studies), the debate over ethnicity reflects three different theoretical perspectives: primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism.[6] Primordialists focus on the cultural symbols of communities, such as blood ties, race, language, region, religion and custom. Clifford Geertz argues that primordial attachments are given, *a priori*, ineffable and affective, and 'some attachments seem to flow more from a sense of natural – some would say spiritual – affinity than from social interaction' (Geertz 1963: 110). Even in a modernizing society, individuals are born into a particular community, within which such an affinity grows.

Anthropological instrumentalists criticize primordialists harshly for their having 'no awareness of the genesis, of the 'sociology', of bonding or identity-formation' (Eller and Coughlan 1993). Instrumentalists treat ethnicity as a social, political, and cultural resource for different interest-groups and status-groups (Hutchinson and Smith 1996). One idea central to the thinking of the instrumentalists is the socially constructed nature of ethnicity, and the ability of individuals to 'cut and mix' from a variety of ethnic heritages and cultures to forge their own individual or group identities (Hutchinson and Smith 1996). However, instrumentalists, such as Brass (1996) and Hechter (1986), are criticized on a number of levels too: for 'neglecting the wider cultural environment in which elite competition and rational preference maximization take place' (Hutchinson and Smith 1996: 9); for defining interests largely in material terms; for failing to take seriously participants' sense of the permanence of the *ethnies*; and for underplaying the affective dimensions of ethnicity (Hutchinson and Smith 1996).

Meanwhile, constructivists working in the field of ethnic studies attempt to offer a compromise on the positions taken by the primordialists and the instrumentalists. Fredrik Barth (1969) is regarded as being the most important intellectual founder of a constructivist theory of ethnicity. He claims that 'the critical focus of investigation

becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses' (p. 79). Interaction with outsiders thus marks the boundary of an ethnic group. He questions the image of each group developing its cultural and social form in relative isolation, and of ethnic groups as culture-bearing 'units', and claims to focus on the social boundaries of ethnic community.

However, the question ought to be whether the claim in Barth's argument is substantial (Rex 1986: 86-91). While emphasis on interaction is important, and identity may be constructed by boundary making, the question is *by what means*? Barth argues that ethnicity arises from competition for scarce resources. However, he does not give particular attention to the value system that creates and maintains the boundary. The question of substantial claim is related to the fact that Barth wrote his thesis to critique the politics of assimilation. Insofar as it does not look at the value system of ethnicity, his argument seems very similar to that of the instrumentalists.

Alternative Approach—Ethnic Community as a Process of Boundary Making

Following on from this discussion, it is necessary to recall the two aspects of community discussed above. The first of these is belief of the constituents of a community in something shared; namely ethnic identity, as highlighted by Geertz (1963). The second is interaction with outsiders, as highlighted by Barth (1969). It is by focusing on these two aspects that one can obtain a more nuanced understanding of community. Anthony Cohen's study *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (1985) provides a useful reference to this sort of two-pronged approach to understanding 'community'. Cohen explains community as follows:

> [Community] is the arena in which people acquire their most fundamental and most substantial experience of social life outside the confines of the home. In it they learn the meaning of kinship through being able to perceive its boundaries – that is, by juxtaposing it to non-kinship (1985: 15).

Cohen's point is that people experience a distinction between kinship and non-kinship, friendship and non-friendship, 'us' and 'them', and the process of doing so amounts to community boundary-making. Cohen elaborates on Barth's view of boundaries, and argues that 'boundaries are marked because communities interact in some way or other with entities from which they are, or wish to be, distinguished (1985: 12). There are many kinds of boundaries, from national or administrative to physical, expressed

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[6] For a detailed discussion of the differences and similarities among the theories, see, Hutchinson and Smith (1996) and Mount (2001).

perhaps by a mountain range or a sea, and even to racial, linguistic or religious, even to 'imaginary' boundaries that 'may be thought of ... as existing in the minds of their beholders' (1985: 12).[7] In other words, community is a process of boundary making, affected by interaction with 'outsiders'. What constitutes the social boundary of a 'community', at which its people distinguish 'us' from 'them', is the understanding among the constituents of the community that they share some kind of 'cultural symbols'. This understanding amounts to a community identity. Social hierarchy and social practices provide useful and specific contexts in which to observe community identity.

In Cohen's approach, interaction with outsiders is important to the process of constructing boundaries. The worlds of meaning in the minds of community members are transformed and crystallized through interaction. This view fits nicely with one of the purposes of my study, which is to investigate the impact of international religious agencies on ethnic community identities. However, what is not articulated in Cohen's study is the overlapping nature of community boundaries. It seems that in Cohen's understanding, the 'boundary' is what constructs a community, what differentiates the margin of a community from an 'other', creating the 'us'. His understanding of community leads to the conceptualizing of not-fixed but mutually exclusive communities. However, the conceptualizing of *inclusive and overlapping* communities is critical as far as this thesis is concerned. Put differently, there can be a number of smaller communities in a given area, and the boundaries of smaller communities may divide the bigger community. This conceptualization of inclusive and overlapping communities is a critical point in the analysis of community structure in an area where a Christian international agency undertakes its activity. I take Cohen's approach one step further, and conceptualize a community boundary as overlapping, rather than as mutually exclusive.

When a Christian international agency undertakes an activity in an ethnic community in China, its civilization, which originates in the West, is not necessarily compatible with the identity of the ethnic community. For example, many Christian and secular international NGOs try to promote gender equality within and among the communities they engage with, but gender equality may conflict with an ethnic community's pre-existing hierarchy. Here, providing an analytical framework is important because it helps us interpret and analyse the interactions between

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[7] This point coincides with Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983), in dealing with nationalism as a mode of political imagination.

international religious agencies and ethnic communities. It is only by interpreting and analyzing actual interactions that we can arrive at a deeper understanding of the nature and scope of the 'civilizing mission'.

Frames of Interaction

The three frames of interaction are conflict, adaptation and the middle ground. These frames are built around the responses of members of 'ethnic communities' to the 'civilizing mission'. The conflict frame refers to a situation in which members of an ethnic community consciously disagree with the ideology of a 'civilizing mission', or with the very existence of such a mission. The adaptation frame, on the other hand, refers to a situation in which the members of an ethnic community reach consensus over the ideology of a 'civilizing mission' in the course of their interaction, leading to adaptation of that ideology by the ethnic community. The middle ground frame does *not* refer to something between the conflict and adaptation frames. It refers to a more mature and deeper relationship between the two parties, which eventually leads to unexpected consequences at the beginning of the interaction. This can, in turn, lead to a heightened level of self-realization within the ethnic community.

For the conflict frame and adaptation frame, Jamas Scott's book *Domination and the Art of Resistance* (1990) is an important reference for use in seeking to explain the conscious resistance of ethnic communities to domination.[8] Scott attempts to explore the 'hidden transcript' of resistance to powerholders, which is defined as a subordinate discourse that takes place 'offstage', beyond direct powerholder observation. In other words, he explores 'something of the imaginative capacity of subordinate groups to reverse or negate dominant ideologies' (1990: 91). He continues:

> It is plausible to consider [something of the imaginative capacity of subordinate groups) part and parcel of the religiopolitical equipment of historically disadvantaged groups. Other things equal, it is therefore more accurate to consider subordinate classes *less* constrained at the level of thought and ideology, since they can in secluded settings speak with comparative safety, and more constrained at the level of political action and struggle, where the daily exercise of power sharply limits the options available to them. To put it crudely, it would ordinarily be suicide for serfs to set about to murder their lords and abolish the seigneurial regime; it is, however, plausible for them to imagine and talk about such aspirations providing they are discreet about it (1990: 91).

The conflict frame and adaptation frame draw on the notion of resistance at the level of consciousness in its investigation of the response of ethnic communities to international

[8] For other explanation on the conscious resistance, see Scott (1983) and Colburn (1989).

religious agency.[9] What follows is an explanation of each of the three frames, and of the various expected responses of members of ethnic communities in relation to each frame.

The Conflict Frame

In the conflict frame, members of an ethnic community consciously disagree with the civilizational ideology of an international religious agency, either in public or discreetly (Scott 1990). This may occur for any variety of reasons. Community identity is not likely to change in this frame because the 'civilizing mission' does not attain legitimacy in the eyes of the members of the ethnic community.[10]

'Resistance' is an important characteristic of expected ethnic community responses within the conflict frame.[11] An important example of resistance is the Boxer Uprising of 1900, in which intensely anti-Western sentiments led to widespread attacks on foreign missionaries and their converts (Purcell 1963). In another example, the members of an ethnic community, confronted by Christian civilizing projects, declined to become Christians, and in some cases declined even to permit the missionaries to stay in their community. Some set fire to church buildings, and even killed some of the missionaries themselves.

Resistance includes not only violent resistance but also manipulation. Members of the ethnic community, for example, take advantage of the material benefits, while pretending to subscribe to the values that the international religious agency is attempting to spread. On occasion, community members have attended Christian churches, and even joined in some church activities, irrespective of whether they have been converted or not. This was done simply because there were material benefits to be had by joining in such activity such as access to education in Christian schools, and to

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9 In discussing a people's consent to a superior ideology, Antonio Gramsci's 'hegemony' is important, but this thesis takes an approach different from his. In his *Prison Notebooks* he contends that 'hegemony' is produced as a result of 'the "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production' ([1930s] 1971: 12). However, Gramsci concentrates on the particular situation in which local communities give 'spontaneous consent' to the dominant group, which if such consent is not forthcoming resorts to coercive force. He does not discuss the situation in which a local community gives *non-spontaneous consent*; in other words, the local community is able to give its consent after due consideration of the civilisational ideology of the dominant group.

10 David Beetham's (1991) definition of legitimacy provides a useful reference here. In defining legitimacy as not only a 'top-down' construction generated by dominant groups, but also a 'bottom-up' construction generated by subordinate groups, his emphasis is on the interaction between the two groups and particularly the extent to which subordinate groups give their consent to the dominant group's projects; i.e., the ideologies implicit in any particular development project.

11 A number of China studies also use 'resistance' in the context of state-society relations. As a representative example, see Perry and Selden (2003).

health care in Christian hospitals. An ethnic community can pretend to go along with an international religious agency while not actually agreeing with it (Thongyu 1986). After the international agency leaves the community, the community members can choose to embrace only the material advantages provided, and revert to their own identity (visible in the pre-existing social hierarchy and social practice).

In many cases, it is difficult to ascertain whether conversions to Christianity are motivated purely by faith or material gain. This manipulation is what James Scott calls the 'hidden transcript' that characterizes 'discourse that takes place "offstage," beyond the direct observation of the powerholders', as opposed to the term 'public transcript', which is 'subordinate discourse in the presence of the dominant' (1990: 4). It is, therefore, important to observe the resistance and consent of community members at the level of consciousness.

The Adaptation Frame

In contrast, within the adaptation frame, members of an ethnic community reach a consensus over the ideology of the 'civilizing mission', which in turn leads to a degree of adaptation. For example, a participatory approach to decision-making may be adapted to sit more easily with a pre-existing social hierarchy. One consequence of this adaptation could be a change in community identity, which is specifically the relationship between community elders and their followers, the men, women and children.

The conflict and adaptation frames overlap. Even in circumstances whereby, community members appear willing to accommodate the civilizing ideology and related activity they may resist in the longer term. For example, in the case of community members consenting to the principle of gender equality, the breakdown of entrenched traditions will not occur overnight, and the actual relationship between men and women may not change for some time—and then maybe only partially. In such cases, the interaction of an international agency and an ethnic community is understood as taking place within the zone of overlap between the conflict and adaptation frames. The third frame is the middle ground frame, and it operates in a way different from the overlapping zone. It requires a much deeper relationship between both parties.

The Middle Ground Frame

The middle ground frame draws on the work of Richard White, entitled *The Middle Ground* (1995). In his analysis of the relationship between whites and 'American Indians' in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, White proposed the notion of the middle ground as a way of moving beyond the simple dichotomy of 'cultural persistence' versus 'conquest and assimilation' (1995: ix). A similar dichotomy exists in my analytical frame—that of conflict and adaptation. They are named differently from White's two because the focus of the framework is on the responses of the members of an ethnic community to external ideologies. Nevertheless, my thesis builds on White's main argument that a dichotomous understanding of the relationship between two parties is not appropriate if one's intention is to gain a better understanding of the depth of a relationship. As he aptly expresses it (1995: ix):

> The history of Indian-white relations has not usually produced complex stories. Indians are the rock, European peoples are the sea, and history seems a constant storm. There have been but two outcomes: The sea wears down and dissolves the rock; or the sea erodes the rock but cannot finally absorb its battered remnant, which endures. The first outcome produces stories of conquest and assimilation; the second produces stories of cultural persistence.... But the tellers of such stories miss a larger process and a larger truth. The meeting of sea and continent, like the meeting of whites and Indians, creates as well as destroys. Contact was not a battle of primal forces in which only one could survive. Something new could appear.

The central feature of the middle ground frame is that as a result of interaction 'something new' is created. It is not a simple 'baptism' of an ethnic community in the ways of Christianity and Western civilizational ideology and their activity nor is it a simple adherence to the *status quo* through a process of incremental adaptation. Interaction may lead to something altogether new, to unexpected consequences. The level of the legitimation of an international agency that occurs on the basis of the middle ground frame of interaction is likely to be very high because there is potential for interaction more as equals than as two parties in a dominant-subordinate power relationship such as exists in the two frames of interaction mentioned above. Interaction interpreted within this frame occurs only after the relationship develops and matures.

Self-realization is the feature of the responses of the members of an ethnic community in the middle ground frame. According to Harrell (1995: 27):

> [Ethnic] consciousness may already exist, but it will be sharpened, focused, perhaps intensified by the interaction with the center. Or in some cases, a peripheral people that has no ethnic consciousness may develop one in response to the pressures of the civilizing project.

A good example of the self-realization of an ethnic community is offered by Tapp (1989) in relation to the Hmong communities living in Thailand. According to him, Christianity offers its converts an alternative to 'the possibilities of the continuation of pantheistic Hmong shamanism or the adoption of the state religion of Thailand' (1989: 85). The alternative is the strengthening of the ethnic identity of the Hmong. This is the observable 'something new' created by the interaction between Christian missionaries and ethnic communities. In the middle ground frame, community identity is likely to be changed or reinforced significantly as a result of self-realization.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a theoretical discussion of the concept of civilization and its meaning in the Chinese context. In so doing, it has revealed that the concept of civilization is by no means simply a product of the West. The Chinese had their own conception of civilization before the encounter with the West. However, as the encounter proceeded, the original concept of civilization *jiaohua* became *wenming*, which resonates more with the Western notion of civilization, understood as advanced technology.

It is important to reiterate that civilization should be understood as a self-proclaimed identity, which may change according to its context and circumstances, or as a result of interaction with others. This understanding of civilization provides a theoretical background against which to locate perceptions of international religious agencies in later chapters.

It is also important to take into account the fact that both the Chinese centre and Western missionaries undertook their civilizing missions in relation to ethnic communities in China. The 'civilizing mission' undertaken by the Chinese centre predated that undertaken by missionaries. To improve our understanding of the nature of the 'civilizing mission' over time, it is thus essential to move beyond the dichotomy of the West as the centre of the civilizing mission, and China as a recipient of such a mission.

This chapter has also provided a theoretical discussion of ethnic community identity, identifying it as something created as a result of interaction with others. Consequently, the three frames of interaction are differentiated by to the extent to which the interaction affects pre-existing notions of ethnic community identity.

The next chapter explores the 'civilizing mission' undertaken by China's centre and provides the necessary historical and contextual background for my empirical chapters that follow. It analyzes the Chinese centre's view of the relationship between itself and its peripheral ethnic communities over time. The Qing Dynasty period (1644 to 1911), the Republican period (1911 to 1949), and the Communist period (1949 to date) will be examined. The chapter will also focus on the Chinese centre's religious policy and its concept of civilization.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CHINESE CENTRE AS A CIVILIZER OF ETHNIC COMMUNITIES: CIVILIZATION AND RELIGION IN CHINESE HISTORY

> 'In the early instance, Christianity was criticized for not being Confucian; this was a criticism proper to Chinese civilization. In the later instance, Christianity was criticized for not being scientific; and this was a criticism from western civilization. Thus the changing character of Chinese opposition to Christianity reflected the progressive disintegration of traditional Chinese civilization'.
>
> (Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate* 1958: 123)

This chapter aims to understand the relationship between the Chinese centre and ethnic communities in China from an historical perspective. From the centre's viewpoint, it focuses on the concept of civilization as one of the determinants of the nature of the centre-ethnic community relationship. While the central purpose of this thesis is to understand the interaction between international religious agencies and ethnic communities, the impact of the centre on any such interaction cannot be neglected. The centre's policies on ethnic communities over time have invoked the term 'civilization', suggesting that the centre has intended to raise the standard of living of ethnic communities, a role attributable to civilizers. However, the precise nature of the civilizational ideology exercised by the centre is related to the period in which it has been exercised.

The study of the Chinese centre-ethnic community relationship is limited in three important ways. First, while scholars have concentrated on analyzing the historical development of China's policies on ethnic communities, they have overlooked a more fundamental, ideational perspective that determines the nature of the centre-ethnic community relationship. June Teufel Dreyer's *China's Forty Millions* (1976), one of the better known books on the study of China's ethnic communities, analyzes Communist state policy in relation to ethnic communities, and the political process of the integration of 'the life patterns and institutions of these groups with those of China, both Han and Communist' (1976: 262). Her book, however, neither discusses what civilization is, nor how the idea of civilization determines the centre-ethnic community relationship. Other literature deals with the more material aspects; typically the political, geo-strategic and economic, rather than ideational aspects (Heberer 1989; Mackerras 1994, 2003).

Anthropological studies pay more attention to ideational concerns and usually deal with the views and perspectives of a particular group of ethnic communities, and the ways in which the centre's policies have affected their identities and cultures. However, anthropologists tend to take a bottom-up approach. Hence, macro-level research on the centre's changing perception of civilization is often overlooked.

Studies on China's traditional tributary system also have discussed the relationship between the centre and so-called 'barbarians' (in this case referring not only to today's so-called minority nationalities, but also to people in the more remote countries of Europe), but very few studies exist that examine the meaning of Chinese civilization and its transformation in depth. The term 'civilization' is often taken for granted, but remains ambiguous. For instance, John Fairbank, one of the more prominent scholars of Chinese history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, provides examples of Chinese civilization in ancient times, such as 'the Chinese ideographic writing system, Confucian classical teachings about family and social order, the official examination system, and the imperial Chinese monarchy and bureaucracy' (1968: 1). However, he does not seriously attempt to explore the Chinese centre's perception of civilization further. In general, a lack of attention to the Chinese centre's perception of civilization is more or less common in the literature on Chinese history, and scholars rarely if at all examine it in detail.

Second, the historical transformation of the Chinese concept of civilization is downplayed in the literature of China studies. In his edited book, Harrell (1995) deals with the Confucian state, the Communist state, and Christian missionaries as 'civilizers' of ethnic communities, but his introductory chapter scarcely touches on the Republican state. Furthermore, the book does not inquire into whether the Chinese centre's perception of civilization has changed in keeping with the changing nature of the centre-ethnic community relationship.

Third, scholars pay scant attention to the impact of Western intervention on the Chinese concept of civilization. Some scholars discuss the impact of international relations on the Chinese centre-ethnic community relationship, and vice versa. However, the term 'international relations' in these discussions refers mainly and more narrowly to China's geo-strategic and diplomatic relations. Some studies have looked at Western influences in relation to human rights in China (Mackerras 1994, 2003), and the impact of Marxism-Leninism on the Chinese centre's policy on ethnic communities (Dreyer 1976; Heberer 1989; Mackerras 1994). However, the literature overlooks the broader question of the extent to which Western intervention has directly affected the

Chinese centre's civilizational ideology. When the so-called 'West' intervened in China in the nineteenth century it attempted to 'civilize' China on the basis of its own Western model of civilization. It is surprising how little research has been done on these Western influences on the actual concept of Chinese civilization.

This chapter has two aims. The first is to discuss the historical transformation of the relationship between the centre and ethnic communities from the Chinese centre's perspective. Specifically, this chapter interprets the centre's views and policies on ethnic communities since the Qing period in order to understand the transformation of the Chinese concept of civilization.

The second aim is to examine the extent to which Chinese perceptions of civilization has converged over time with 'Western civilization', especially in relation to the latter's emphasis on modernization and religion. China experienced increased exposure to Western ideas in the late nineteenth century. In particular, Christianity and modern technology each had a significant impact on the Chinese interpretation of civilization. This chapter will look at the Chinese centre's religious policies in relation to ethnic communities, and examine how these policies were a reflection of the broader Chinese understanding of civilization, either explicitly or implicitly. An exploration of the Chinese centre's religious policy also serves to lay the foundation for subsequent chapters, which focus on international religious agencies that have undertaken evangelizing and development activity on mainland China.

This chapter deals with a long period of history, so it is divided into three time periods: the Qing Dynasty period (1644 to 1911), the Republican period (1911 to 1949), and the Communist period (1949 to date). Political transformation had a significant impact on the Chinese understanding of civilization upon which the centre-ethnic community relationship was based, as well as on religious policies. Therefore, the division of this chapter into three time periods provides a useful basis on which to examine the impact of any transformation in the relationship between the Chinese centre and ethnic communities. However, it is important to note that this periodization does not represent major change in the meanings of civilization or religion. It is impossible to assign the history of the transformation of these two concepts to precise periods, because civilization and religion are interwoven in very complex ways, and have themselves transformed over time.

The Confucian Perception of Civilization during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911)

In examining Qing views and policies on ethnic communities, we first need to determine what characterized the Manchu Qing centre. This necessarily leads to a discussion about the ethnic relationship of the Manchu to the Han they ruled. The Qing was a Manchurian dynasty, and the political power balance between the Manchu and the Han was a serious issue impacting on the stability of the Empire from the very beginning of Qing rule.[1] Furthermore, even though the emperor was a Manchu, maintaining a Manchurian ethnic identity was a significant issue, given the fact that the majority of the population of the Qing Empire was Han.[2] The Manchu, who shared the centre with the Han during the Qing period, had been regarded as an ethnic community in the earlier Ming period (1368-1644). The way the Manchu transformed their status ideationally from 'ethnic community' to 'centre' is fundamentally important in an exploration of the centre-ethnic community relationship in the Qing period.

Scholars are divided over the ethnic identity of the Qing centre. The historian, Mary Wright (1957: 51), claims that the Manchu were fully 'sinicized', and that 'between 1860 and 1890, the Manchu-Chinese dividing line tended to disappear'.[3] In contrast, other scholars have argued that the sense of Manchu ethnic identity remained strong (Crossley 1990a; Rigger 1995; Rawski 1998; Rhoads 2000). The latter argument is supported by a consideration of the way in which the Manchu were able to adapt the Confucian worldview to suit their own identity. According to Wittfogel and Feng, the following four points precluded the 'complete amalgamation' of the Han and the Manchu:

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1 In 1611, Nurhaci (1559-1626), a Manchu, established the Jin Dynasty, the antecedent of the Qing Dynasty, by unifying thirteen different tribes. These various tribes were not connected by blood relations or ethnic links. In other words, as Ishibashi (2000: 66-67) points out, the Jin Dynasty was the first step in establishing a multi-ethnic Qing Dynasty. This story in fact highlights the complexity of ethnic relations. The Qing Dynasty is often described as a Manchurian dynasty, but it was Nurhaci who created the category 'Manchu'. After Nurhaci died, his eighth son, Hong Taiji (1592-1643), succeeded him and decided to rename the dynasty 'Qing'. In 1644, the Qing army rallied its troops and conquered Beijing, the capital of the Ming Dynasty. See Crossley (1997).

2 The concept of ethnicity and race were introduced to Chinese audiences in the late nineteenth century. Therefore, it is questionable whether the 'Manchu' identity, as an 'ethnic' identity, existed in the early Qing period. Crossley (1990a: 225) states that 'applying the term to earlier periods is anachronistic and distorts the historical reality'. But she argues that this does not mean that the Qing rulers did not have their own identities, but that the concept of 'Manchuness' is important. Elliott (2001) claims that the 'ethnic sovereignty' of the Manchu was increasingly evident by the end of the eighteenth century. For discussion on 'ethnic labelling' of the Manchu, see Rigger (1995).

3 The term 'sinicization', the translation of Chinese term '*hanhua*' (汉化) or 'to become Han', is also problematic. It fails to 'make much distinction between assimilation and acculturation... "sinicization" is silent on the self-identification that is so fundamental to a sense of ethnicity in China or anywhere else' (Crossley 1990a: 223). Also, see Crossley (1990c).

> (1) the persistence of the earlier military organisation known as the Eight Banners, membership in which placed most Manchus outside normal Chinese jurisdiction, (2) the absence of primogeniture in the Manchu dynastic succession laws, (3) the Manchu dominance of the bureaucracy, especially the top posts, and (4) the general ban on intermarriage, which was not revoked until 1904 (1949: 51-52).

The Confucian worldview was Sino-centric, having as its central image a 'graded and concentric hierarchy', at the centre of which the Son of Heaven (*Tianzi* 天子) existed (Fairbank 1968). The Mandarin word for China, *Zhongguo*, literally means the Middle Kingdom, and the world was constructed as illustrated in Illustration 2.1. According to this worldview, the dividing line between the Chinese and the barbarians, or the civilized and the uncivilized, was mainly determined by their respective levels of competence in relation to moral and cultural education: for example, by understanding Chinese written characters, rituals and customs represented by ceremony (*li* 礼),[4] and agrarian ways of life, as opposed to traditional herding (Fairbank 1942; Lattimore 1951; Walker 1971; Mōri 1998).[5]

Based on their achievements in terms measured against Chinese civilization, the Qing distinguished inner barbarians from outer barbarians. When 'uncivilized barbarians' (*shengfan* 生藩) more closely approximated the civilization of the Han, they could become 'civilized barbarians' (*shufan* 熟藩) (Yang 1968). This ability to re-categorize is important in any civilizational ideology. The degree of civilization, from civilizer to uncivilized barbarian, was based on modes of livelihood and levels of cultural sophistication; ethnic communities were permitted to participate in the bureaucracy and in the official examination system if they had acquired at least some of the features of civilization, such as a knowledge of literature and of ceremony (Wang 2001). The fact that the Qing centre set up Confucian schools in some peripheral areas is also evidence of a flexible categorization of civilized and uncivilized (Rowe 1994; Shin 1998). In sum, the Qing centre did not necessarily specify an immutable duality in its concept of civilization. There was always civilization by degrees. When ethnic communities more closely approximated the civilizers, they came to be called the civilized. Ethnic communities were 'others' from the Qing point of view, but it is important to note that there was a variety of types of 'other'.

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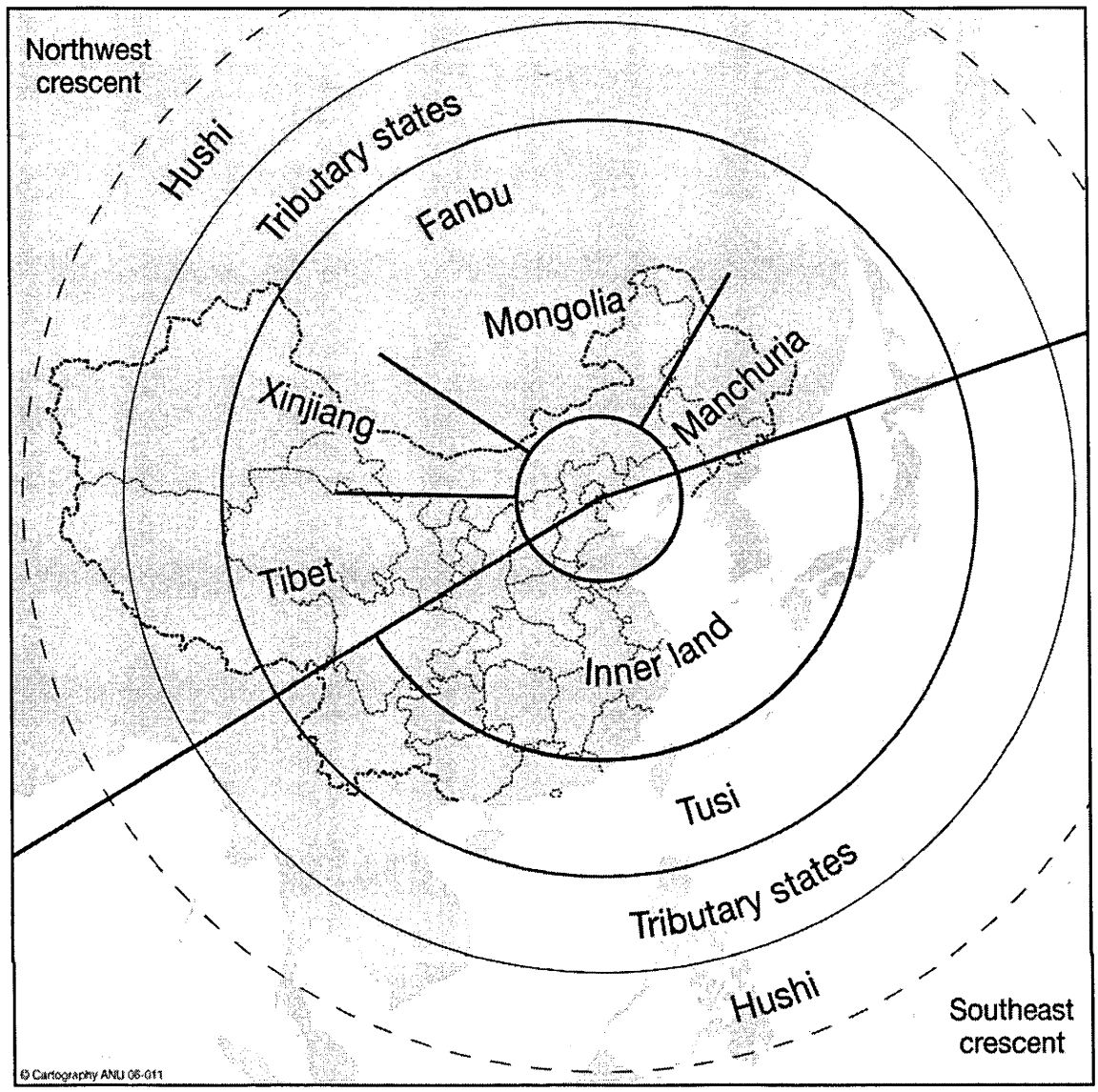
[4] A study by Pamela Crossley reveals that 'Ming "ethnologists" were concerned not with race or language as determinants of civilized peoples, but with modes of livelihood; agriculturalists were deemed more civilized than herders of the steppes' (cited in Harrell 1995: 19).

[5] The ceremony included the ritual of kowtowing, which provoked some opposition among Europeans, most famously Lord Macartney, in the late eighteenth century.

Illustration 2.1: Image of Confucian Worldview[6]



Source: Kataoka (1991: 26) and Mōri (1998: 2); modified by author with the help of Cartography Section, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University.

Before the Manchu established the Qing Dynasty, the Han-Chinese Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) employed a Confucian Sino-centric worldview as the ideological basis of

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[6] According to Kataoka (1991), the Qing Dynasty conceptualized its ruling system in five areas: (1) inner land (内地); (2) *tusi* governing area (土司); (3) *fanbu* (藩部) or vassals; (4) tributary states (朝贡国); and (5) *hushi* (互市) or markets trading with minority nationalities or foreign countries. The inner land zone was the area where the Qing Dynasty directly governed by dispatching its own officials. The *tusi* governing area was where the Qing indirectly governed by using local people. The *fanbu* was the area where Qing Dynasty felt military threat, whereas the tributary states and *hushi* were, at least in the earlier Qing period, perceived as having less military threat (Kataoka 1991: 25-26). Despite the fact that many call the Confucian worldview as forming 'concentric circles' (for example Fairbank 1968), more accurately concentric circles can not be applied to China's east, specifically, Japan, Korea and Liuqiu Dynasty (today's Okinawa). The Qing in fact recognized Korea and Ryūkyū Dynasty as tributary states (Fairbank 1941, 1968) while in this map Korea is located in the inner land zone and Liuqiu Dynasty in the Tusi zone. Furthermore, in the perception of the Qing, Japan existed outside the tributary state zone (Fairbank 1968; Hamashita 1999), but in this map Japan lies somewhere in between the inner land and Tusi zones. The author has shown a larger region here to include countries in Southeast Asia

its foreign policy. The Qing persisted with the Ming worldview, which raised a serious problem because Confucian ideology interpreted the Manchu as foreign barbarians. To solve this problem, the Manchu needed to make certain modifications to the Confucian worldview. According to Abe (1971: 39), the political power of the Qing was predicated on their adopting the view of the Chinese Confucian philosopher Hanyü (韩愈) (768-824), who said, 'having the features of the (civilized) Middle Kingdom makes one part of the (civilized) Middle Kingdom' (夷伙にして中国たれば、これを中国とす). In other words, if there were enough features of the Middle Kingdom in the barbarian, then the barbarian would be considered part of the Middle Kingdom. In terms of Confucian civilizational ideology, the Qing justified their status as civilizers on the basis of Hanyü's view, and on their claim to having features of the Middle Kingdom even though they had been barbarians in a former period of history.

In line with this way of thinking, one of the first things the Qing did was redefine the features of Confucian civilizational ideology. They did so not directly by destroying the Han superiority but indirectly by assimilating the Han in terms of blood, culture and governmental institutions into their multi-ethnic empire (Wright 1957). One of the examples is the pigtail decree which Dorgon (1612-1650), a regent for the boy emperor Shunzhi (1638-1661), issued in 1645. The pigtail decree required all Chinese men to shave their foreheads and have their hair braided back in the Manchu-style queue. The Han Chinese resented the decree, but those who did not obey it were executed. This was summarized in popular parlance: 'Keep your hair and lose your head, or lose your hair and keep your head' (Ishibashi 2000: 119-20).[7] The hairstyle was not only a matter of fashion, but also, according to Ishibashi (2000: 118-19), a matter of 'Chinese' culture and civilization. The Book of Filial Piety (*Xiaojing* 孝经), a classic that defines Confucian civilization, claims 'body, hair and skin are given by parents. Having them undamaged is the beginning of filial piety' (Ishibashi 2000: 118-19). Hence, from the Han point of view, the decree was seen as a barbarian order to force the Han Chinese to abandon their civilization.[8]

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[7] Moreover, Dorgon issued another decree to adopt the Manchu style of dress—now called the 'China dress'—and to stop wearing the loosely hanging robes of the Ming.

[8] This decree also played a role in ensuring the surrender and submission of the Han to the Manchu. After the Qing fought against the Ming, the Qing forced hostages and those who surrendered to wear the Manchu-style queue as a token of submission. After the Qing Dynasty overthrew the Ming Dynasty, the former forced the Han to do the same. Nevertheless, as time passed, the mandated pigtail gradually became the norm among the Han, and interestingly, the pigtail became a symbol of 'Chinese' civilization by the middle of the eighteenth century. This is supported by the fact that the Qing attempted to ban the wearing of pigtails by Chinese Muslims and barbarians, to distinguish them from the civilized Han (Abe 1971: 41).

Having successfully transformed the features of Confucian civilizational ideology, the Yongzheng Emperor went a step further and redefined the concept of the *yi* (barbarian). Acknowledging the difference between Han and Manchu, he admitted on the one hand that 'Manchu blood differs from Han blood, in the same way as Mongol and Tibetan blood too differs from Han blood' (Abe 1971: 41). On the other hand, he commented that 'we too, as equally as the Han, have been the culturally 'civilized centre' (*zhonghua*) in sophisticated morality and religion' (Abe 1971: 41).[9] In other words, the Yongzheng Emperor thought that if *yi* meant barbarian, then the Manchu were *hua* (civilized); but if *yi* meant different ethnic group, the Manchu were happy to remain *yi* (Abe 1971: 41). This distinction in the interpretation of *yi* is very important in examining the ideational change in interpretation made by the Qing civilization. While the civilization of *zhonghua* was still important, the differences in the meanings of *yi*, from barbarian to ethnicity, meant the Manchu could retain their ethnic identity as long as the centre was *zhonghua* (civilized).

The Manchu were content to be different from the Han. The Manchu identity as a different group was not new, but the Qing, it is worth noting, realized that to become *zhonghua*, the Manchu and the Han did not necessarily need to be the same; rather, the level of civilization was the essential determinant of the centre. Based on this, both the Manchu and the Han, both of whom acquired the same level of civilization, namely *zhonghua,* were legitimately the 'centre'.

Realization of and satisfaction with the idea of dual ethnicity affected the way the Qing centre managed its relationship with peripheral areas. In the initial stages of the Qing period, the centre implemented a policy of the separation of ethnic communities in the Northwest (Mongolia, Xinjiang and Tibet) and the Southwest (Yunnan, Guizhou, and Sichuan) from China proper. These two regions are historically different. While the former did not have much interaction with the Han, and had quite distinctive cultures and religions, the latter was relatively closer to the Han, with which it had more interaction. The former was governed by the Office of Border Affairs (*Lifanyuan* 理藩院); the latter by six ministries, which also had responsibility for domestic affairs. Reflecting the degree of difference with which the northwest crescent was regarded, the Qing centre prohibited the Han residing in China proper from going beyond the mountain ranges of northern Tianshan in 1683 (Mōri 1998). This is interesting from a

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[9] The translation of *zhonghua* requires a cultural understanding of the term. *Zhonghua* is usually translated as Chinese, but literally, *zhong* means 'the centre' and *hua* means 'civilized'.

civilizational perspective, because even though civilization should be spread throughout the entire 'world', the Qing centre was first and foremost concerned with political stability among the ethnic communities. In other words, the separation of the Han from the ethnic communities in the northwest crescent was a realistic option as far as the Qing centre was concerned. In fact, the Qing after its peak in the eighteenth century lacked unilateral military power. Fairbank raises an interesting and salient point:

> Their chief political problem was how to maintain Chinese superiority in situations of military weakness. Solutions included cessation of contact; indoctrinating the foreigner in the Chinese view by cultural-ideological means; buying him off by honors or material inducements or both; using one barbarian against another through diplomatic maneuvers (1968:12).

In practice, the Qing did not have the capacity to civilize ethnic communities coercively, in particular in the northwest crescent (Tibet, Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia). In the Chinese record, nevertheless, the terminology of tribute would be applied to them, even if the ethnic communities did not actually comply with the forms of tribute (Fairbank 1968). To understand the actual military power balance between civilizers and civilizees is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless it is important to keep in mind the discrepancies between civilizational ideology and its coercive application by the military power of the Qing.[10]

For the purpose of managing the separation policy and yet still maintaining control over the dangerous northwest crescent, the Qing centre established *Lifanyuan* in 1638, (Di Cosmo 1998). Specifically, its role was to bestow privileges and to preserve the title of Mongolian kings and the Tibetan Lama, and to indirectly control the northwest crescent. In contrast, southwest China was governed by a system called the *Tusi* system (土司制度), which involved indirect governance by means of administration by native chiefs (Herman 1997; Shin 1998).

In the nineteenth century, the centre's policy on ethnic communities saw a fundamental change from separation to assimilation. This was particularly apparent in the northwest crescent, and it is best exemplified by the building of the province of Xinjiang in 1884. Scholars note that the motivation for the assimilation of Xinjiang was largely geo-strategic, with an eye on Russia, together with the need to obtain taxes from the locals to maintain a strong military influence as a part of the process of modern state building (Kataoka 1991; Motegi 1993). These are certainly important motivations.

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[10] In the Republican period, the inability of the government to bring its military power to bear in controlling ethnic communities was a more significant issue, and the distance between the ideal of civilizational ideology and its realization was considerable.

However, it cannot be denied that the transformation of the concept of *yi* in Confucian civilizational ideology, from barbarian, which has a negative connotation, to ethnicity or constituent member of the multi-ethnic empire, which has a positive connotation, was also an important factor in the centre's decision to assimilate Xinjiang into the empire (Motegi 1993). When ethnic communities were identified as *yi* it was possible for the *yi* to become like the civilizer by learning the ways of the civilizer, thereby moving closer to the civilizer's level. However, when ethnic communities were identified as a different ethnic group, there was no reason to unite them with the Qing in an empire. Assimilation becomes very meaningful at this point, from the centre's point of view, because it gives the centre its legitimacy as the centre of culture, and as the unifier of the empire.

The assimilation of Xinjiang into the empire also had a significant impact on the everyday lives of the people of Xinjiang. The Qing cancelled their policy of preventing the Han from going to Xinjiang, and actively encouraged increasing numbers of Han Chinese to move there. The policy of assimilation aimed to change 'Uighur customs to the Chinese way (*huafeng* 华风)' by establishing schools and teaching Mandarin Chinese (Zuo Zongtang; cited in Kataoka 1991: 202). The policy on 'internal' migration from China proper to peripheral areas is called '*yimin shibian*' (移民实边), literally meaning sending migrants forcefully to frontiers. For example, in Inner Mongolia, 'from about 1 million Han at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the figure rose to 1.55 million by 1912' (Mackerras 1994: 121). It was put into effect partly because of population pressure in China proper, and partly because of an attempt by the Chinese government to control ethnic communities by sending its military into them and by assimilating their people through intermarriage (Menzies 1992; Cheng 1994; Tsukada, Segawa and Yokoyama 2001).

In Southwest China, the policy of assimilation began earlier than in the northwest crescent. In the mid eighteenth century, the centre attempted more direct control in Southwest China by changing the *Tusi* system to the *Gaitu Guiliu* (改土归流) system, which involved direct governance by the appointment of Chinese magistrates (Ma 1994: 386-95). One example of assimilation was the order to change Miao surnames to Han-Chinese ones (Wang 2001). In addition, the literature describes Confucian schools that aimed for the 'moral transformation' of ethnic communities (Rowe 1994).[11]

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[11] Furthermore, assimilation was due not only to an imposition by the centre, but also to the willingness of ethnic communities to be assimilated by the centre (Kikuchi 1994). The ethnic communities

Motegi (1993) argues that the change of policy towards assimilation constituted a shift away from the voluntary reception of civilization *by* ethnic communities, to the imposition of civilization *on* ethnic communities. In other words, ethnic community receptiveness to civilization was, at least at the theoretical level, based on free will. The Qing could not force ethnic communities to accept civilization. However, after the policy change, civilization was imposed on ethnic communities. It is then that the ethnic communities were reduced to the status of so-called 'minority nationalities', compared with the overwhelming Han who had a background in the inner areas. This coincides with the shift from an 'open and loose, hierarchical' empire, to the modern nation state (Motegi 1993).

Confucianism and Peripheral Religions

If Confucianism sanctified and legitimized the centre's power, how did the centre deal with peripheral religions, that is, the religions of the ethnic communities, such as Tibetan Buddhism and Islam? Did the Qing centre attempt to spread the idea of Confucianism to the ethnic communities in the process of civilization?

To begin with, whether Confucianism is a religion needs to be questioned. Scholars have argued that Confucianism is not a religion because it poses 'no god or supernatural dogma', and instead focuses mainly on ancestor worship (Yang 1961: 244; Kaji 1990: 24). Lu Xun (魯迅), one of the more famous intellectuals of the late Qing and Republican periods, did not recognize Confucianism as a religion, and criticized it as nothing more than a theory of the imperial systems of China's historical dynasties.[12] However, Kaji (1990: 24) argues that such criticism is a one-sided view. He suggests that it is important to recognize two aspects of religion, which are (1) the top-down aspect—that is, that ethics and morality were institutionalized in the imperial dynasties (*reikyō sei* 礼教性), and (2) the bottom-up aspect—that is, that religious belief of the masses ultimately plays a role in providing people with an explanation of death (*shūkyō sei* 宗教性). Criticism of Confucianism, such as that provided by Lu Xun, examines only the first of these two aspects, in terms of religion's being an ideology of the imperial dynasties; but this does not deal with the fact that Confucianism had been supported by the masses for more than two thousand years (Kaji 1990: 24-26). Both

followed Confucian civilization and realized that they were able to obtain some degree of material gain by becoming government officials by means of the centre's official examination system.

[12] For example, his novels, *Diary of A Madman* (*Kuangren Riji* 狂人日记) ([1918] 1990) and *The True Story of Ah Q* (*A Q Zhengzhuan* 阿Q正传) ([1921] 1933) criticize Confucian feudal society in China.

aspects have in common the teaching of filial piety (*xiao* 孝), which refers to a worship of ancestors, as well as love and respect for parents, and the giving of birth to descendants.

To be sure, Confucianism is not a state religion in the same sense that the Church of England is the state religion of Great Britain, in which the religious practices of the King or Queen are the same as those of the masses. The religious practices of the Chinese emperors were very different from those of the masses, even though both were based on Confucianism. The Emperors worshiped Heaven, which gave them their mandate. Even though the idea of the Mandate of Heaven was claimed by every dynastic power and widely accepted by the common people (Yang 1961: 127), worshipping Heaven was not common practice among the people.[13] Rather, ancestor worshipping was central to their beliefs. In short, although Confucianism was not a state religion in the European sense, it had a religious aspect that was rooted in the practices of the common people.

The centre attempted to spread the idea of Confucianism to ethnic communities.[14] Although the centre did not attempt to force people both in China proper and at the periphery to believe in Confucianism, it did define Confucianism as being superior to other forms of religion. For example, the Qing centre claimed to be a 'protector of the Buddhist world' (Song [1795] 1982: 347). It encouraged the spread of Lama Buddhism, and supported it by building many temples and monasteries and giving their occupants economic privileges, such as exemption from all taxes and dues (Dabringhaus 1997). At the same time, however, the *Lifanyuan* was responsible for sending an *amban*, the centre's representative, to Lhasa, in Tibet, in order to control the monks there. It even intervened in the process of identifying reincarnations of the Dalai Lama. Under Confucian civilizational ideology, it was believed that a living official, who was guided by the Emperor, had superior power over the gods and spirits of a rank lower than his own. Moreover, 'whenever the people or the officials believed that the miracle of a god had helped in a major public crisis, the emperor would bestow a title upon the deity as a reward' (Yang 1961: 181).[15] Thus, one can argue that there was a hierarchical

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[13] Furthermore, the centre monopolized the performance of rituals in the worship of Heaven. The laws of the Qing Dynasty clearly mention that 'those who make private appeal to Heaven and worship the Seven Mansions, burning incense at night, lighting the Heavenly Lamp and the Seven-Star Lamp, shall be punished with eighty strokes of the stick' (Yang 1961: 183).

[14] For studies on Confucian culturalism, see Ebrey (1996), Bol (1987), Langlois (1980), Crossley (1990b) and Duara (1993).

[15] Peripheral religions often held political and military power. If the centre thought it could not control them, or that its own security was under threat, it did not hesitate to fight wars against ethnic

relationship between civilization and religions. Confucian civilization, which defined emperors as the greatest existence in the universe, was superior to peripheral religions, from the centre's point of view.

Christianity, however, as a religion with Western imperial power underpinnings, did not fit into this hierarchical order. Christian missionaries, originally supervised by the imperial household, were prohibited from evangelizing. Some missionaries worked secretly inside China, and, when the authorities discovered them, faced serious punishment. The situation changed after the Treaty of Tianjin in 1858, in which the open preaching of Christianity was protected (Wang 1982: 88, 95, 97 and, 107; Yao and Luo 2000: 21). After 1858, because of foreign pressure to admit missionaries, the centre could not control Christian missionaries by means of its civilizational ideology. One can argue that the presence of Christian missionaries in China, who had their own Christian civilizational ideology, brought about a 'clash of civilizations' at least at the central level.

Han-Centric Perception of Civilization during the Republic of China (1911-1949)

During the Republican era, the centre's ideal was to assimilate ethnic communities as a means of strengthening the historical formation of the Chinese nation (zhonghua *minzu* 中华民族). After the Manchu were completely expelled from the centre following the 1911 revolution, the Han regained authority at the centre.[16] The assimilation of ethnic communities was encouraged in a variety of ways throughout the Republic period. This section will examine the ideas of two major actors, Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek, as representatives of the centre's views and policies, and explore the ways in which they understood civilization.

The Republic of Five Nationalities (*wuzu gonghe* 五族共和) formed the constitutional basis of the Republic of China.[17] Sun Yat-sen stated in his inaugural declaration of provisional presidency on 1 January 1912 that 'the essence of nation lies in people. To make the Han, Manchu, Mongolian, Hui and Tibetan one is called the

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communities to retain control (Waley-Cohen 1998). The centre's attempt to retain its control over religion was due to a need to not only control ethnic communities, but also to control heretical sects, the potential of which to become rebellious sects was considered very high—as in the case, for example, of the White Lotus Buddhists of the 1770s. For the relationship between heretical sects and rebellions, see Suzuki (1974) and Yang (1973: 657-60).

[16] For the anti-Manchurian sentiment at the end of the Qing period, see Rhoads (2000).

[17] This chapter has used the term 'ethnic communities', but because Sun Yat-sen used the term 'nationalities' to refer to the Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui and Tibet, this section sometimes follow his usage of the term 'nationalities'. However, this does not mean that this thesis follows Sun's understanding of the centre-ethnic community relationship.

unification of nationalities' (国家之本，在于人民。合汉、满、蒙、回、藏诸族为一人。是曰民族之统一) (Sun 1982a: 2). This declaration is very famous and is often quoted in a number of pieces of literature. Nevertheless, it is unclear from the literature what the idea of the Republic of Five Nationalities actually meant for the centre-ethnic community relationship: whether the emphasis lay on an equal relationship among the five nationalities, or on the unification of nationalities, with the hidden assumption that the Han population was the cultural centre and the other four nationalities should be assimilated into the Han. In fact, Sun Yat-sen's various speeches were not consistent in terms of these two different interpretations. For example, in his speech delivered to the Association for the Promotion of the Republic of Five Nationalities in Beijing and the Association of Northwest Cooperation on 3 September 1912, he emphasized the equality of the five nationalities, comparing it to the inequality of the Qing period.

> Of the five nationalities, Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui and Tibetan, the Manchu held superior status, grabbed ultimate power and authority, and controlled the other four nationalities. Regarding the Manchu as the master, and the other four as slaves, inequality among the nationalities reached its bounds.... Now five nationalities are like one family. They stand on equal status, the problems of inequality among the nationalities are solved, and coincidently, the problems of inequality in politics are also solved. Conflicts will never happen again. Our hope is that the five big nationalities will cooperate from their hearts, make state policy together, and allow China to advance to become a first class civilized power in the world. This is the big responsibility that we five nationalities take together (Sun 1982d: 438-39).

> 汉、满、蒙、回、藏五大族中，满族独占优胜之地位，握无上之权力，以压制其他四族。满洲为主人，而他四族皆奴隶，其种族不平等，达于极点。（中略）今者五族一家，立于平等地位，种族不平等之问题解决，政治之不平等问题亦同时解决，永无更起纷争之事。所望者以后五大民族，同心协力，共策国家之进行，使中国进于世界第一文明大国，则我五大民族公同负荷之大责任也。

The idea of an equal relationship among the five nationalities under the new Republican government was symbolized in the flag of the Republic, which had five equal stripes (Dreyer 1976: 17; Kataoka 1984: 279).[18]

However, a number of scholars point out that Sun Yat-sen did not intend to actually establish equal relationship among the five nationalities. They argue that *wuzu gonghe* merely meant assimilation into the Han (Dreyer 1976; Kataoka 1991; Matsumoto 1999; Wang 2001). The clearest example is in Article 3 of the Constitution

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[18] The five equal stripes of the colours, red, yellow, blue, white and black, stood for the Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui and Tibetan peoples respectively. This flag was used until 1928, when the current flag of the Republic of China (Taiwan), the White Sun Banner (*Qingtian Bairi Qi* 青天白日旗), became its national flag. See, Harrison (2000).

of the Chinese Alliance Society (中国同盟会总章) issued on 3 March 1912, which states: 'This association has the following political ideas.... to implement racial assimilation' (第三条 本会政纲分列如下：（中略）实行种族同化) (Sun 1982b: 160). By way of another example, Sun proclaimed in a speech at the inauguration of the Association for the Promotion of the People of Five Nationalities (五族国民合进会) that 'our five nationalities originally have the same ancestors, we are the father and sons, the older brothers and younger brothers, who have the same bloodline and are of the same branch' (Sun 1986: 400).

Two contradictory arguments about the equal status of, and relationship among, the five nationalities, and about the assimilation of ethnic communities into one category, raise questions about motivation. Matsumoto (1999: 87) claims that Sun changed the nuances of the Republic of Five Nationalities formulation depending on who his interlocutor was. In other words, although Sun emphasized racial assimilation to Han Chinese to stimulate their feelings of superiority, he appealed to Mongolian kings and Islamic clerics by extolling the virtues of the idea of equality among nationalities and the advantages of joining the Republic of China.

If the discourse does not clearly highlight what the centre sought to do, actual practice by the centre in relation to ethnic communities provides the scholar with a clearer idea. The centre attempted to maintain stability and the unification of the state, and to assimilate ethnic communities into the centre. For these reasons, the centre needed to reach a degree of compromise with ethnic communities (Kishi 1989; Matsumoto 1999: 92). For example, in the north, the centre experienced a threat from Russia under the latter's moving-south policy, and needed to foster and maintain a good relationship with the Mongolians to shore up its northern security. In the southwest, the conflict between China and Tibet (the latter enjoying the support of the British Empire), reached a peak in tension around 1917 (Hirono 2001). It was very difficult for China to defend its international border regions against external imperial power without cooperating with local powers in peripheral areas.

The relationship between the centre and Mongolia at the beginning of the Republican period provides us with an interesting example of both compromise and the centre's intention to push its assimilation policy as far as it could (Kishi 1989). At the beginning of the Republican period, Mongolian kings and nobles claimed independence. In order to pacify ethnic communities in the north, the centre appealed to them, assuring them it would preserve the status of those nationalities as equals of the Han, maintain

their patents of nobility and property and provide freedom of religious belief. However, Yuan Shi-kai, the president who succeeded Sun in 1912, was looking for every opportunity to rule Mongolia. In 1913, when Bogdo Khan occupied Mongolia, Russia recognized Mongolian sovereignty. Yuan deployed his military force to Inner Mongolia, and on the back of the influence of the military presence, he established the Office of Mongol and Tibetan Affairs (*Mengzang Yuan* 蒙藏院), with a direct organizational link to himself as the President. This meant that presidential power was strengthened, entitling him to use it directly against Mongolia. In addition, the centre decided to build three provinces in Inner Mongolia. The Mongolian kings sought to protect their interests and prestige and strongly protested the decision, but their protests were ignored. The centre created 'special administrative areas', ruled by governors (*doudu* 都督) despatched from the centre. To a great extent this process limited the Mongolian kings militarily and diplomatically, and in terms of administrative and legal rights, as well as limiting their economic prestige. The ideal of the Republic of Five Nationalities thus simply paid lip service to the rights of ethnic communities.

The term 'Chinese nation' (*zhonghua minzu* 中华民族) that started to appear in Sun's policy statements in the 1920s implied a unified nation consisting of five nationalities united as a result of assimilation. In his speech, delivered on 6 March 1921, at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Guomindang at Canton, the 'dying out' of nationalities was emphasized, and the different nationalities were brought together under the new glue of a Chinese nation (*zhonghua minzu*).

> The name "Republic of Five Nationalities" exists only because there exists a certain racial distinction which distorts the meaning of a single Republic. We must facilitate the dying out of all names of individual peoples inhabiting China, i.e. Manchus, Tibetans, etc. In this respect we must follow the example of the United States of America, i.e. satisfy the demands and requirements of all races and unite them in a single cultural and political whole, to constitute a single nation with such a name, for example, as "Chunhua" [China – in the widest application of the name]. Organise the nation, the State (Sun 1927: 229).[19]

In his policy on the Chinese nation, Sun did not forget to emphasize that the Han were the most important nationality capable of helping and defending the ethnic communities from external imperial power.

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[19] Furthermore, the 'dying out' of nationalities is emphasized in the face of the threat of imperialism. According to Sun Yat-sen, the assimilation of all five nationalities was necessary because they (four nationalities) did not have the ability to defend themselves, and the Han Chinese had a duty to help them'; otherwise, the result would have been the 'shame of the Han Chinese' (我们汉族莫大底羞耻) (Sun 1982f: 473).

> Manchuria is attached to Japan, Mongolia to the USSR, and Tibet to Britain – this is a sign that they are unable to defend themselves. To free themselves, they only have to rely on us, the Han. Now, I think of a means to harmony, and you will find that it is to make the Han the centre. Let other nationalities assimilate to the Han, and also, let the other nationalities join in our institutions and give them an opportunity to build the nation. Like the scale of American nationality, we will change the Han into a Chinese nation (*zhonghua minzu*), compose one complete nation-state, and make ourselves one of the two biggest nationalist states in the eastern and western hemispheres together with the US (Sun 1982f: 474).

> 彼满洲之附日，蒙古之附俄，西藏之附英，即无自卫能力底表征。然提撕振拨他们，仍赖我们汉族。兄弟现在想得一个调和的方法，即拿汉族来做个中心，使之同化于我，并且为其他民族加入我们组织建国底机会。仿美利坚民族底规模，将汉族改为中华民族，组成一个完全底民族国家，与美国同为东西半球二大民族主义的国家。

Sun Yat-sen's priority was to unify the Chinese nation-state in the face of a threat from western imperial powers. The way he used the concepts of self-determination and autonomy in the mid 1920s is evidence of this. The Manifesto of the Chinese Guomindang's First National Congress (中国国民党第一次全国大会宣言) in January 1924 stated:

> The Kuomintang solemnly proclaims: (it) recognizes the right to self-determination of all the nationalities within China. After the victory of revolution against imperialism and warlords, (it) will organize a free and united Republic of China formed by the free association of all the nationalities (The Manifesto of the Chinese Guomindang's First National Congress: 17; translated by Mackerras 1994: 57).

> 国民党敢郑重宣言：承认中国以内各民族之自决权，于反对帝国主义及军阀之革命获得胜利以后，当组织自由统一的（各民族自由联合的）中华民国。

The actual means of 'self-determination' as expressed in the manifesto is unclear. One interpretation (Ikeda 1983) is that it refers to the right to separate from the state, and in this regard, China was influenced by the USSR's position, which permitted the right to separate from the state. A second interpretation (Dreyer 1976; Connor 1984; Hirano 1988; Mackerras 1994) is that Sun's argument is contradictory. Dreyer, for example, argues that 'Sun, more orator than logician, never bothered to reconcile' the contradiction between self-determination and unified nation state (1976: 17).[20] A third interpretation (Duara 1995; Fizgerald 1996; Matsumoto 1999) is that self-determination was the same as assimilation. Matsumoto (1999: 112) interprets Sun's understanding of autonomy in China as the support of a unified central authoritarian state by local

[20] Hirano (1988: 58) argues that because China's priority was to build a strong nation-state, Sun took an anti-imperialist view of outsiders and a 'Republic of Five Nationalities' view of insiders, and his views acknowledged the right to self-determination but not the right to separation.

authorities. In fact, Sun Yat-sen used the example of the relationship between the United States and its colonial outpost, the Philippines, and stated that 'America nurtured the independence of the Philippines, and reformed it by setting up a foundation for local autonomy. Within twenty years, the Philippines had transformed extensively from a barbaric race to a civilized nation as a result' (美国之欲扶助菲岛人民以独立也，乃先从训政着手，以造就其地方自治之基础。至今不过二十年，而已丕变一半开化之蛮种，以成为文明进化之民族) (Sun 1982g: 211). In other words, self-determination and autonomy were tools of the nation state.

Sun acknowledged tacitly that the Chinese nation had not yet been civilized as a whole, and that his ideal was to do so. He stated that 'the Chinese nation was the oldest, largest, most civilized and strongest nation with the greatest assimilative power in the world (中华民族者，世界最古之民族，世界最大之民族，亦世界最文明而最大同化力民族也) (Sun 1982e: 186). Conceptualising a Chinese nation in this way, Sun made it clear that assimilating ethnic communities and creating a Chinese nation would lead to the unification of a country able to defend itself against external imperial powers. Rather than obtaining legitimacy of rule by defining the centre-ethnic community relationship as one between civilizer-civilizee, unification of the state was the source of the centre's legitimacy, and therefore the centre attempted to ignore the ethnic or civilizational differences among its ethnic communities.

It is important to note the Confucian origin of the Chinese nation in Sun's thinking. In Sun's speech of The Three Principles of People (*sanmin zhuyi* 三民主义), one can observe a Confucian understanding of civilization.

> We must retrieve our nation's status. Other than everyone's getting together to make a group of national citizenry, we need to retrieve our own old morality. Once we have our own morality, it is then that our own national status can be retrieved. Speaking of China's own morality, what the Chinese cannot forget even now is, first, loyalty and filial piety; second, philanthropy; third, trust, and fourth, peace.... Nowadays, the most civilized nation in the world can speak of filial piety, but they are not as perfect as China. Therefore, filial piety cannot be unnecessary. The nations in the Republic of China need to raise loyalty and filial piety to the highest level, then naturally the nation will become strong and flourish (Sun 1982h: 244).

> 我们现在要恢复民族的地位，除了大家联合起来做成一个国族团体以外，就要把固有的旧道德先恢复起来。有了固有的道德，然后固有的民族地位才可以图恢复。讲到中国固有的道德，中国人至今不能忘记的，首是忠孝，次是仁爱，其次是信义，其次是和平。（中略）现在世界中最文明的国家讲到孝字，还没有象中国讲到这么完全。所以孝字更是不能不要的。国民在民国之内，要能够把忠孝二字讲到极点，国家便自然可以强盛。

In sum, civilization was defined not only in the context of governing ability, but also still in the context of Confucian morality—an interesting parallel to the Qing period.

The Nanjing government established by Chiang Kai-shek in 1928 attempted to further strengthen control of the periphery, but the period from 1928 to 1949 saw unrelenting political and military power struggles between the centre and ethnic communities. The government's first attempt to control the periphery was to establish the Committee of Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs (*Mengzang Weiyuanhui* 蒙藏委员会). The Committee's task was to deal with administrative affairs relating to the periphery, and with a variety of projects in Inner Mongolia and Tibet. However, the Committee failed to function because the centre was militarily and administratively too weak relative to local power holders. The actual administration of Inner Mongolia and Tibet was conducted by local governments in those respective places (Mōri 2000; Hirono 2001).

Chiang Kai-shek continued this policy by drawing on Sun Yat-sen's idea of assimilation. His book *China's Destiny* ([1943] 1947) is a compilation of the ideas of a national citizenry (*guozu* 国族). He explains the evolution of a Chinese nation as follows:

> The Chinese [note: Chunghua in original] nation, as may be seen from its history, has grown by a gradual amalgamation of various stocks into a harmonious and organic whole. These various stocks, originally of one race and lineage, were scattered east of the Pamirs, along the valleys of the Yellow River, Huai River, Yangtze River, Amur River and Pearl River. Due to their different geographical environments, they had developed different cultures, and this in turn accounted for their different characteristics. However, during the last five thousand years a continuous process of amalgamation has been going on through frequent contacts and constant migrations so that they have now become integral parts of one nation. In this process, culture and not military might has been the actuating force; and the method of assimilation has been by a stretching forth of a helping hand, not by conquest (Chiang [1943] 1947: 4).

> The entire Chunghua nation, so solid in its make-up, is destined to live gloriously or perish ignominiously as a whole. The fact that it comprises five stocks is due not to diversity in race or blood but to dissimilarity in creed and geographical environment. In a word, the distinction between the five stocks is territorial as well as religious, but not ethnological (*ibid*: 13).

The Guomindang's Third National Congress in March 1929 clearly stated that the 'peripheral provinces of Mongolia, Tibet and Xinjiang ... [are] originally a part of the Chinese nation (*zhonghua minzu*) in history, geography and national economy' (蒙古、西藏及新疆边省（中略）在历史上地理上及国民经济上则固同为中华民族之一部), and 'the Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui and Tibetans should form a strong national

citizenry' (*guoze*) (汉、满、蒙、回、藏人民密切的团结，成一强固有力之国族) (Rong 1985: 646). With regard to peripheral politics, the resolution at the Congress of 1929 contained the following:

> Our party solemnly declares that we will use an example in the past as a negative one, and correct evil policies of both the Manchurian Qing and warlord periods, which tricked Mongolia and Tibet, and neglected the interests of the Xinjiang people. We will, with sincere heart, support development of economy, politics and the education of each of these people, and confidently hope that they will all advance together along the road of civilizational progress, and to create free and united Chinese Republic In this way we hope that we may maintain eternal peace in China and promote Universal Harmony of the world (Rong 1985: 647).
>
> 本党敢郑重述明：吾人今后比例矫满清、军阀两时代愚弄蒙古、西藏及漠视新疆人民利益之恶政，诚心扶植各民族经济、政治、教育之发达，务期同进于文明进步之域，造成自由统一的中华民国。必如此，庶足以保持中国永久之和平，而保进世界之大同也。

The Guomindang's Central Political Congress endorsed a decision that Inner Mongolia, Qinghai and Ningxia would become provinces in 1928. However, the creation of provinces was only a nominal change because of the weakness of the central government.

The responsibility of the centre to pull the four nations up to the level of Han is very similar to the Confucian civilizational ideology of the Qing period. The main difference between the Republican and the Qing periods lies in the stronger articulation by the Republicans of the assimilation of the five nationalities under the category of a Chinese nation and national citizenry. Accordingly, the concept of civilization also moved from being located in a Confucianism context to being located in an international context, while retaining remnant Confucian thought. The Chinese nation was understood to be unified by assimilating ethnic communities into the Han, so that China would become a first class civilized nation.

It is also important to acknowledge that neither Sun nor Chiang took into account the diversity of ethnic communities in the south, in places such as Yunnan, Sichuan and Guizhou. In their discourse, 'nationalities' referred only to Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui and Tibetan nationality. June Teufel Dreyer (1976: 16) writes that 'Sun either did not know about them or felt they were so close to 'dying out' as to be unworthy of attention'. In addition to this observation, the lack of attention to the issue of the centre-ethnic community relationship in general was not unrelated to their ignorance of the issue of ethnic communities in the south. Compared to other urgent issues, such as the wars and conflicts between the nationalist and communist parties, China's semi-

colonization by external imperial powers, and the Sino-Japan war from 1937, the centre-ethnic community relationship did not attract too much attention.

Religious Policy on Ethnic Communities

With regard to religious policies in the Republican period, the centre did not attempt to assimilate religions. Chiang Kai-shek mentioned in *China's Destiny* that 'the distinction among the five nationalities in China depends on regions and religions, not on race and bloodline' (Chiang [1943] 1947: 119-21). It is in fact not an easy task to trace the centre's religious policies. Very little literature deals with religious policies dealing with ethnic communities in the Republic period. In addition, there are very few documents of the Guomindang National Congress that discuss religious matters in 'main issue' terms. Some documents deal with peripheral problems but do not mention religious aspects.

One possible reason for this lack of sources is that religious matters tended to be dealt with in local contexts in this period, owing to the weakness of the centre's material power and its control of the periphery. For example, Tibet maintained de facto independence during the Republic period, and religion was totally maintained and dealt with by local religious leaders (Lamb 1986; Goldstein 1989: 30-36; Smith 1996). In contrast, Xinjiang did not have de facto independence because it became a province in 1887, and a governor was sent from the centre. However, the distance between the centre and Xinjiang was too large for the centre to control it tightly. In other words, Xinjiang retained a degree of natural autonomy, not because the centre intended that be the case, but because the centre did not have enough resources to prevent Xinjiang from exercising such natural autonomy. Because of its ability to exercise a degree of such autonomy, the religious policy adopted by Yang Zengxin (杨增新), who was sent by Yuan Shi-kai in 1912 to become Xinjiang's governor, was locally defined. He understood the importance of religious issues, having worked in Gansu where many Muslims resided. He allowed for the maintenance of the traditional religious system in such manifestations as the existence of a religious court and religious schools (Zu 1991: 250; Kinoshita 1998: 133). In contrast, Sheng Shicai (盛世才), the most powerful warlord in Xinjiang in the 1930s and 1940s, sponsored a vigorous campaign in favour of atheism (Forbes 1986; Mackerras 1995: 20). One can argue that the features of religious policy as it related to ethnic communities varied depending on the area, and on the skill and prowess of the middle man in the local area.

To understand the degree of general hostility to Christian missionaries working in peripheral areas at the time, it is important to discuss the anti-religion campaigns of the 1920s, even though they are not directly related to the centre's religious policy on ethnic communities. These campaigns targeted religions and superstitions in general, but the attack on Christianity was particularly serious. The campaigns originated in the anti-Christian movement of 1922, when the Peking Anti-Religious Federation (*Beijing Feizongjiao Da Tongmeng* 北京非宗教大同盟) came into being in China. Its manifesto makes the following claim:

> We swear ourselves to sweep away the poison and harm of religion on behalf of human society. We profoundly deplore the fact that in human society religion has spread a poison which is, ten times, a hundred times, a thousand times worse than floods or ferocious animals.... Religion and mankind cannot both exist.... In the beginning men were free and equal; but this is distorted by religious explanation (Zhang 1927: 193-94).

Yamamoto and Yamamoto (1953) argue that there were three main factors that became the basis of the anti-Christian movement in China during 1922-1927: the New Thought movement, nationalism and Communism.

The first factor was the New Thought movement, the basis of which lay in science and democracy. The New Thought movement was influential among young intellectuals including Chen Duxiu (陈独秀) after 1915. It insisted that religion oppose science and hinder its development (Yamamoto and Yamamoto 1953: 137), thus rendering religion useless (Kiang 1948: 58). Accompanying the great fervour for science at that time, an overwhelming majority of modern educated Chinese intellectuals thought that religion was 'a relic of man's primitive ignorance of the physical laws of the universe' (Yang 1961: 364-65).

The second factor was nationalism. It was natural that the anti-Christian movement was associated with nationalism because Christianity in China originated in the attentions of the Western imperial powers. The view of the majority of Chinese intellectuals was, as Bertrand Russell put it in 1922, that 'white men have gone to China with three motives: to fight, to make money, and to convert the Chinese to our religion' (Russell 1922: 198ff; Yang 1961: 364). The government also attacked mission schools, and insisted that education should be completely free from all sectarian churches and political parties, and advocated 'restoration of educational rights' (Yamamoto and

Yamamoto 1953: 140). In November 1925, the Ministry of Education promulgated stringent regulations governing schools established by foreigners.[21]

The third factor was a combination of communism and anti-feudalism, together with the Republican government's political and economic strategies at the local level. Yamamoto and Yamamoto (1953: 144) emphasize that basically the anti-Christian movement was associated with anti-capitalism. It was argued by Chinese intellectuals of the day that Christianity and the Christian churches were devils, who supported and helped the property-holding class 'which eats without working' and looted and oppressed the proletariat 'which works but is unable to eat' (Yamamoto and Yamamoto 1953: 144).

In summary, in the Republican period the centre's religious policy was not clear, and religious matters were left to the local level. However, there is no doubt that anti-religion campaigns heightened anti-Christian sentiment. It is difficult to conclude exactly what the relationship between civilization and religion was in this period, due to the paucity of the centre's religious policy. Nevertheless, the fact that anti-religion campaigns derived from Chinese nationalism highlights the fact that religion was understood as a force countering national independence and the unification of the nation, a force potentially destructive of the very concept of civilization.

Communist Perception of Civilization during the PRC (1949 – Today)

The relationship between the centre and ethnic communities in the Communist period appears to be very different from that of the Qing and Republican periods. The greatest difference between the Communist centre and its predecessors lies in the notion of equality. Article 50 of the interim constitution, the 'Common Program', adopted on 29 September 1949, clearly states that 'all nationalities (*minzu*) within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China are equal'. However, as will be examined later, the extent to which they were equal in practice is questionable. The following section will firstly provide an historical perspective on the Communist centre's policy in relation to ethnic communities, and secondly examine the realities of the claim to 'equal relationship' between the centre and ethnic communities.[22]

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[21] Yamamoto and Yamamoto (1953: 142-43) argue that in the late 1920s anti-Christians and Christians cooperated under the banner of nationalism.

[22] The 'centre' in the Communist period in this chapter means the Han Chinese and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the majority of whose members were Han. Little literature on China's centre-ethnic community relationship questions the category of 'Han' (Blum 2002: 1297). Although

The Communist Policy on Ethnic Communities

In the 1950s the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) policy towards 'minority nationalities' (*shaoshu minzu* 少数民族) had two distinct factors. The first was the national regional autonomy system (*minzu qüyü zizhi zhidu* 民族区域自治制度) that came into being after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. The Communist centre demarcated areas in which ethnic communities were concentrated, created autonomous regions, prefectures and counties, and provided these areas with autonomous rights. These included the right to use minority language, the right to control their own financial affairs, and the right to issue local regulations, all 'under the unified leadership of the state'.[23] An important point to note here is that this system was established to help 'minority nationalities' become a part of the PRC, rather than to facilitate the self-determination of ethnic groups, in the sense of an ethnic group having the 'right to have a separate and distinct identity, to govern itself and to determine the political and legal status of the territory it occupies' (Evans and Newham 1998: 497). This purpose recalls Sun Yat-sen's idea of self-determination, which was understood as having as one of its ultimate aims the unification of the state.[24]

The second factor in CCP policy on 'minority nationalities' was the concept of a united front. This idea aimed at creating a united front of cooperation among 'the upper strata of patriotic bourgeois nationalities', including the political, social and religious leaders of peripheral areas (Dreyer 1976: 94). The government established the United Front Work Department (UFWD) (*Tongyi Zhanxian Gongzuo Bu* 统一战线工作部) of the Party Central Committee in 1944 (Dreyer 1976: 95). Li Weihan (李维汉), an appointed head of the UFWD, and leader on the issues of minority nationality throughout the 1950s, commented on the role of the upper strata of minority nationalities and religious leaders.

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it is important to take into account the question of whether the Han are a homogeneous nationality, this thesis deals with the Han as one nationality, because it takes a centre's policy perspective.

[23] The Law of The People's Republic of China on the Autonomy of Minority Nationality Regions, Beijing Xinhua in English, FBIS Transcribed Text, 16 May 2002.

[24] The CCP did not endorse the right to self-determination out of a fear of the threat of imperialism. Zhou Enlai discussed this issue in 1949 as follows: 'Any nationality has the right to self-determination. There is no doubt about that. Today, however, imperialists are attempting to separate Tibet, Taiwan and Xinjiang [from China], and I hope each nationality will not rise to the bait offered by the imperialists' provocation. For this reason, the name of our country is the People's Republic of China, and not Federation' (任何民族都是有自决权的，这是毫无疑问的事。但是今天帝国主义者又想分裂我们的西藏、台湾甚至新疆，在这种情况下，我们希望各民族不要听帝国主义者的挑拨。为了这一点，我们国家的名称，叫中华人民共和国，而不叫联邦。) (Zhou 1984: 140).

> Within each minority nationality, there are a few members of the upper strata. They are from pre-capitalism and capitalism exploiters, and that bunch of intellectuals of the exploiting class. The contradiction between them and us, working peoples, can be only resolved by social reform (including democratic reform and socialist transformation). On the other hand, the majority of these people from the upper strata take a patriotic stand. They have certain link with working peoples in ethnic matters, and for some of them also in religious matters, and have become public leaders of minority nationalities. In some minority nationalities, this kind of public leader has great influence (over working people). From early on, our Party accurately assessed these two situations in relation to public leaders of minority nationalities, and adopted a policy of both struggle and unity with them.... After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, a united front in this direction was further enlarged and strengthened. Relying on this course of the united front (in this policy), we went through the process of peace and liberating Tibet. We develop links with many minority nationality masses to whom in the past we had few link or none, and developed our work among them. This was something that contributes to the role in the alliance with working peoples (Li 1981: 156-57 (25 September 1956)).
>
> 各少数民族内部多少都有一些上层人士，他们是前资本主义的或者资本主义的剥削者以及这些剥削阶级的知识分子。他们同劳动人民间的矛盾，只有经过社会改革（包括民主改革和社会主义改造）才能解决。另一方面，这些上层人士的大多数具有爱国立场，在民族关系上，部分的还在宗教关系上，同劳动人民有一定的联系，成为本民族的公众领袖。一部分少数民族中，这种公众领袖有很大的影响。我们党很早以来，就对于少数民族公众领袖这两个方面的情况作了正确的估计，并对他们采取了争取、团结的政策。（中略）中华人民共和国成立以后，这方面的统一战线更加扩大和巩固了。借助于这方面的统一战线，我们经过和平方式解放了西藏，我们同许多过去没有联系或者很少联系的少数民族人民群众发生了联系，开展了工作，这就是对劳动人民的联盟起了辅助作用。

In this manner, the government indirectly controlled peripheral areas by cooperating with these public leaders.

In the two decades that followed, the minority issue was ultimately understood as an issue of class struggle. The centre's policy at that time aimed at 'economic integration, the assimilation of minority nationalities, the destruction of religions, making compulsory the ideology of the Cultural Revolution, and militarising the periphery' (Mackerras 1994: 152; Mōri 1998: 102, 107).[25]

After the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and the arrest of the Gang of Four, China's policy on ethnic communities began to be retrieved. At the beginning of the new era under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, an article in the *People's Daily* (16 November 1978) emphasized that there was political, economic and cultural inequality in practice among minority nationalities, and that future policy must resolve this issue (Mōri 2000: 118). Although it did not refer to any specific political inequality, it was

significant that the Party actually admitted to there being inequality among minority nationalities. The Communist government has made efforts to solve economic and cultural inequality among minority nationalities since the 1980s. In 1986, the State Ethnic Affairs Committee of the PRC (*guojia minzu shiwu weiyuanhui* 国家民族事务委员会) confirmed that:

> the main issue in minority nationality projects is that many minority nationality areas are both economically and culturally lagging behind; their economic efficiency is low, and their poverty is increasing. Among all the minority nationalities, the starvation of fifteen million Chinese has not been overcome, which still impacts on stability and the unification of minority nationality relationships (Quanguo Renda Changweihui Fazhi Gongzuo Weiyuanhui 1994: 1027).

Therefore, economic undertakings and poverty alleviation became the highest priorities in peripheral areas. In 2000, the state announced its Great West Development Program (*xibu dakaifa* 西部大开发) in an attempt to begin to develop Western China and to alleviate the poverty of ethnic communities.[26]

At an economic level, the Communist centre publicly acknowledged the existence of inequality between the Han and ethnic communities. However, the centre still turned and continues to turn its back on inequality at a more fundamental, ideational level. One can discern this inequality in some important theories on which the centre's policy is based. Two of these theories are highlighted here. The first is Fei Xiaotong's, *Plurality and Unity Within the Configuration of the Chinese Nation* (*Zhonghua Minzu Duoyuan Yiti Gejü* 中华民族多元一体格局). This most influential theoretical work supporting this policy on ethnic communities was published in 1988. Fei argues:

> During a long period of mutual contact many groups were mixed, aligned, or integrated, while others were divided and became extinct. In time the groups unified into one group which consisted of a number of subunits that kept emerging, vanishing, and remerging, so that parts of some subunits became a part of others, yet each retained its individual characteristics. Together they formed a national entity which was at once pluralistic and unified (Fei 1988: 167-68).

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[25] For studies on the impact of the Cultural Revolution on Inner Mongolia, see Sneath (1994) and Woody (1993).

[26] There is extensive literature on the Program. *The China Quarterly* June 2004 (Issue 178) has a discussion on the Program in each province and autonomous region. The *Xibu Dakaifa* is variously translated as the 'Western Great Development' Program (Sines 2002; Yeung and Li 2004), 'Open Up The West' (Goodman 2004) etc. The 'West' refers to the six provinces of Sichuan, Gansu, Qinghai, Yunnan, Guizhou, Shangxi, all five autonomous regions of Tibet, Xinjiang, Ningxia, Guangxi and Inner Mongolia, and the Chongqing municipality. With regard to problems with the term 'west,' particularly in relation to the diversity of the west and the centre's intention to homogenise issues in the 'west', see Goodman (2004) and Sines (2002). For the history of development in Tibet, see Dreyer (2003a). For the impact of development on traditional cultures of peripheral people, see Lemoine (1989).

> The formation of the ethnic entity of Han was an important step by which the entire Chinese nation came into existence as a national entity, as the Han were a nucleus for what I have described as the Chinese people's pluralistic and unified configuration (*ibid*: 178).[27]

Fei's theory has two contradictory aspects. One is the superiority of the Han centre. The other is the homogeneity of all minority nationalities. This theory currently lies in the mainstream of Chinese scholarship and is reflected in much of the literature. Moreover, Fei's theory of a 'pluralistic and unified configuration' encouraged patriotism and rallied support against separatist movements. For example, Xinjiang is a part of an inseparable unified motherland, and minority nationalities in Xinjiang are an organic part of the plural and unified Chinese nation (Mōri 1998: 78).

The second theory is Stalin's idea of universal historical progress, which suggests scales on which to measure the political and economic stages of each *minzu* (minority nationality), namely, the primitive, slave, feudal, capitalist, and socialist modes of production. The Chinese Communist government undertook an ethnic identification project (*minzu shibie gongzuo* 民族识别工作) in the 1950s, and classified each *minzu* according to Stalin's scale.[28] Harrell argues:

> This [determination of minzu on the scale] was important in order to plan the political struggles and developmental campaigns that would raise the civilizational levels of the various minzu. For example, people judged to be at the late-feudal stage of the landlord economy (which is where most of the Han peasantry was judged to be also) were to undergo the violent class struggles of the Land Reform program, while those who were still at the slave stage, or even showed vestiges of the primitive commune, were subjected to the much milder process, involving cooptation of leaders to the state project, and known as Democratic Reform (1995: 24).

The scaling of *minzu* based on Stalin's idea of universal historical progress describes curious aspect of 'equality' between the Han and ethnic communities. Ethnic communities who are now backward (*luohuo* 落后) will develop over time according to the scale. Civilization by the centre leads all *minzu* to 'march together on the road to historical progress, that is, to socialism' (Harrell 1995: 24). Hence, the hidden assumption is that the degree of civilization of the Han differs from that of ethnic communities. In other words, equality is not something that existed from the beginning. The condition of ethnic communities was regarded as backward, and unequal to that of

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[27] In the original, 'Chinese nation' is written as '*Zhonghua minzu*', and the English translation of this is rendered as 'people'. However, I changed it to 'nation' because I have adopted the translation 'Chinese nation' in my discussion of the discourse on the Chinese nation in the Republican period.

the Han. Equality is something for all nationalities to achieve, the desired *result* of efforts by the centre to civilize ethnic communities.

Preferential policies (*youhui zhengce* 优惠政策) were introduced in the 1980s to assist 'backward' minority nationalities to become as civilized as the Han. These included quotas for higher education, preferential treatment for certain kinds of employment, economic investments in minority nationality areas, special measures taken to alleviate poverty, and the right to bear two (or three in rural areas) children, in spite of the One Child Policy (Mackerras 2003: 27).

Help from the Han is an important aspect of Chinese Communist civilizational ideology. This is highlighted in the rhetorical description of the Han as big brother, and of 'minority nationalities' as younger brother. Li Weihan (李维汉) presented the relationship among nationalities as follows:

> The relationship among nationalities in our country is equal, friendly and cooperative.... It is a must that the Han help minority nationalities. Is it the duty of the Han to help minority nationalities? Is it to repay the Han's debts? I think the Han's help of minority nationalities is the Han's honourable duty. This is because the Han economy and culture are relatively superior (to those of minority nationalities), and domestically the Han is in a leader's position, as if in a household, a big brother helps younger brothers learn and become adult. Isn't this a duty by any means? (Li [1957] 1981: 200)

> 我国各民族间的关系是平等、友好、合作的。（中略）汉族帮助少数民族，这是肯定的。汉族帮助少数民族，是不是义务？是否可以说还债？我看汉族帮助少数民族是个光荣义务。因为汉族经济、文化等方面都比较占优势，在国内居于领导地位，譬如在一个家庭中老大哥帮助小兄弟读书承认，难道不是义务么？

Li Yu focuses on the same rhetoric to describe the relationship between the Han and minority nationalities. In her examination of Communist propaganda posters, she claims that 'minority nationalities' are represented as 'children' or 'childlike', while the Han are depicted as 'big brother' or 'educational father' (Yu 2000). This relationship is called 'internal orientalism' or 'internal colonialism' in some literature (Hechter 1975; Schein 2000; Oakes 1995). These efforts to differentiate the Han (us) from ethnic communities (others) in such asymmetrical way were intended to create homogeneity among the Han 'at the expense of the exoticized minority' (Gladney 1994: 95).

In sum, the preferential policies and accompanying argument that minority nationalities are economically and culturally 'backward' clearly highlight the

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[28] Many works discuss the problems with the ethnic identification project and its impact on identities of ethnic communities. For example, see Wellens (1998), Diamond (1995), Gladney (1991), Harrell (1990) and McKhann (1995).

civilizational ideology of Communist China: that 'big brother' Han is the more civilized, and that the 'big brother' must help the backward little (minority) brother. Even though discriminatory terms such as barbarian (*yi*) are banned in Communist China, ethnic communities are still considered backward, while the Han are regarded as more advanced. During the Republican period, the civilizational centre shifted toward the West, but in the Communist period, the Han retrieved their status as the civilizational centre.

Restrictions on 'Freedom of Religious Belief' and 'Superstition'

The centre's religious policy on ethnic communities in the Communist period is based on the freedom of religious belief guaranteed under the 1982 Constitution.[29] However, the extent to which this 'freedom' has been realized in practice is highly questionable. This is because the Communist centre's view on religion is underpinned by Marxism-Leninism. Marx (1970) defined religion as 'the sign of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions'. He argues that 'it is the opium of the people' and hence the abolition of religion, as the illusory happiness of men, is a demand for their real happiness'. He envisaged that religion would eventually disappear. This view underpins the Chinese centre's views on religion and influences its religious policy. This section will first examine the current religious policies and administrative structure of religious organizations, and then discuss some issues in relation to the centre's proclamation of 'freedom of religious belief'.

Except during the turbulent period of twenty years from 1957 to 1976, the United Front Work Department (UFWD) controlled religious matters and issued religious policies and regulations throughout the Communist period.[30] This was done in order to develop and maintain a cooperative relationship with religious leaders so that the centre could control ethnic communities. In addition to this organization, the Religious Affairs

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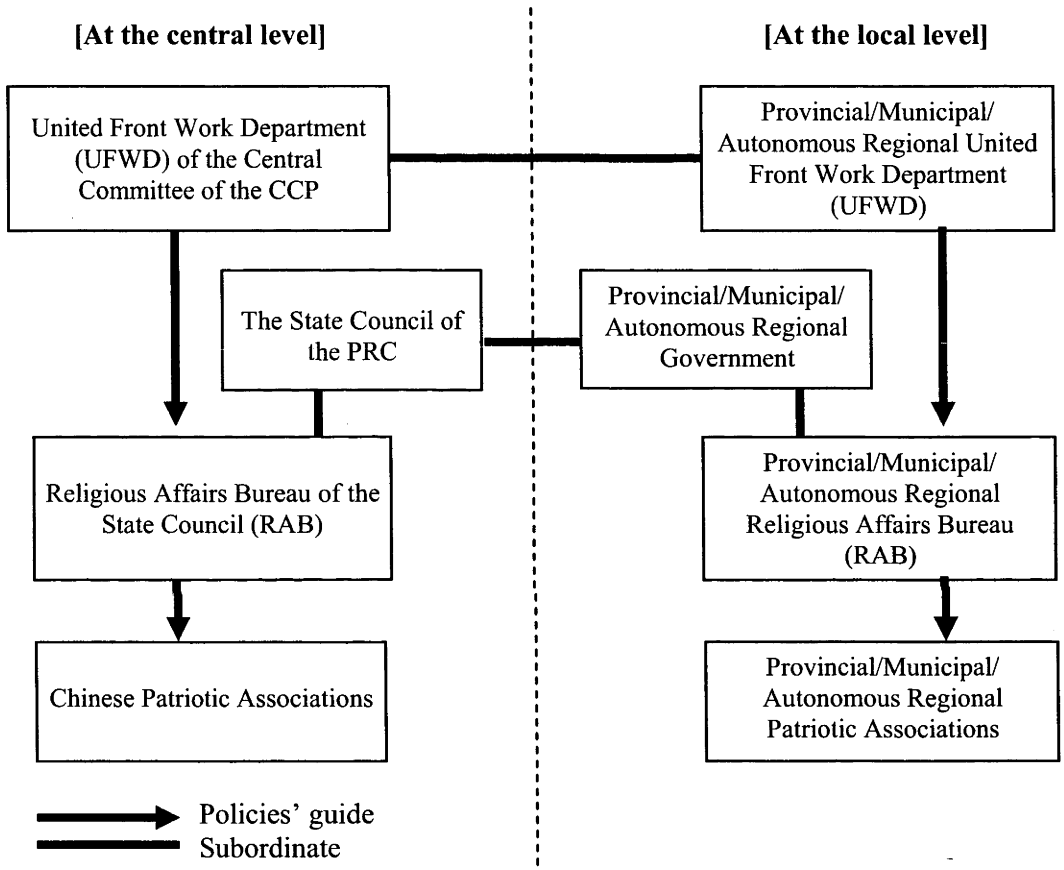
[29] Article 36 of the 1982 Constitution states that:
Citizens of the People's Republic of China have the right to religious belief. No state organ, social organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in any religion or not believe and neither may they discriminate between citizens who are believers and those who are not. The State protects normal religious activities. No-one may use religion to destroy social order, damage the health of citizens or obstruct the activities of the state educational system. Religious organizations and religious work must not be controlled by foreign forces (Constitution; translated by Dillon 2001: 4).

[30] During the Anti-Rightist Movement (1957), the Great Leap Forward (1958-1961) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), religion was seen as representative of the old 'feudal' order. Religious activities were totally banned; temples, churches, statues and properties were destroyed; and most clergy and religious practitioners were arrested and prosecuted. The turbulence ended with the death of Mao Zedong and the arrest of the Gang of Four in 1976, and the CCP reconsidered its religious policy.

Bureau (RAB) (*Zongjiao Shiwu Jü* 宗教事务局) of the State Council was established in 1954 as a subordinate organization to the UFWD. Its task was to implement religious policies and to supervise religious activities (The State Council 1995).[31] As Table 2.1 shows, the UFWD supervised and guided the RAB, which in turn, directed its local branches at county level. The local RABs controlled religious practices 'so that they did not constitute a threat to the power of the CCP' (Dillon 2001: 6).

Table 2.1: Administrative Structure of Religious Organizations in Communist China



Source: Diocese (2004: 7).

One of the main duties of the RAB is to 'encourage religious personnel to promote patriotism and socialism, support education in safeguarding national unity and ethnic harmony, [and] strengthen and develop the patriotic United Front among all religious nationalities' (The State Council 1995: 380). Based on this statement, the RAB educates religious professionals in order to guide them under socialism, because they should be 'patriotic, law-abiding, and support the Socialist system' (Document 19;

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[31] The RAB changed its name to the State Religious Affairs Bureau (SRAB) (*Guojia Zongjiao Shiwu Jü* 国家宗教事务局) in March 1998.

translated by MacInnis 1989).[32] Patriotic religious organizations are established 'to assist the Party and the government to implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, to help the broad mass of religious believers and persons in religious circles to continually raise their patriotic and socialist consciousness' (Document 19; translated by MacInnis 1989).

Five national religious associations were established under the direction of the RAB in 1957, and they still exist to implement the CCP's religious policies. They include, the Chinese Buddhist Association, the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, the Chinese Daoist Association, the Chinese Islamic Association, and the Chinese Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) (Yang 1961: 394; Dillon 2001: 7). In addition, in the 1980s, the Chinese Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Chinese Catholic Religious Affairs Committee, and the China Christian Council were added to the above (Dillon 2001: 7; Diocese Justice and Peace Commission of the Hong Kong Catholic: 2004). Individual churches and temples must follow the directions of these associations. In other words, all religious organizations at the local level are located at the bottom of the state organizational structure.

It is important to briefly touch on the TSPM here, because it relates to one of the most important features of the Communist centre's religious policy. 'Three-self' implies that China's Protestants should get rid of any relationship with imperialism, by means of self-management (*zizhi* 自治), self-support (*ziyang* 自养), and self-propagation (*zichuan* 自传). In other words, Chinese Protestants should manage churches *by themselves*, become economically independence from imperialist countries and raise funds *by themselves*, and preach the Bible *by themselves*. Wu Yaozong (吴耀宗), a member of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in Beijing in the 1920s, undertook the Three-Self Movement (*sanzi yundong* 三自运动) in the 1950s (Bush 1970: 170-208; Wickeri 1988). In 1954, Wu Yaozong became the Chairman of the Protestant Three-Self Movement, and made explicit the proper posture of the church: Christians should show a new spirit on the basis of 'Love-country Love-church' (*aiguo aijiao* 爱国爱教), stressing patriotism, nation-building, anti-imperialism, self-support, church unity, and purification of the church (Wu 1954; MacInnis 1968: 96).[33]

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[32] Document 19 is entitled as 'The Basic Viewpoint and Policy on the Religious Question during Our Country's Socialist Period', promulgated in March 1982. For English translation of the text, see MacInnis (1989: 10-26).

[33] Chinese Catholics do not have a three-self movement as such; but they do subscribe to the 'Three-Self' policy.

Although freedom of religious belief has been enshrined in laws and regulations, there remain some issues that prevent freedom of religious belief from being realized. Three points serve to demonstrate the restriction of freedom of religious belief. The first relates to the Three-Self movement and control over association with international religious groups. The Communist government is aware of an increase in contact between Chinese and foreigners since Deng Xiaoping's Open Door Policy was promulgated in 1978.[34] Document 19, issued in March 1982, deals with international religious contacts as follows:

> There are reactionary religious groups abroad, especially the imperialistic ones such as the Vatican and Protestant foreign-mission societies, who strive to use all possible occasions to carry on [*sic*] their efforts at infiltration "to return to the China mainland." Our policy is to actively develop friendly international religious contacts, but also to firmly resist infiltration by hostile foreign religious forces.... All religious organizations and individuals must be educated not to make use of any means whatsoever to solicit funds from foreign church organizations... As for donations or offerings given in accordance with religious custom by foreign believers, overseas Chinese, or compatriots from Hong Kong and Macao to temples and churches within our territory, these may be accepted. But if it is a question of large contributions or offerings, permission must be sought from the provincial, urban, or autonomous-area governments or from the central government department responsible for these matters before any religious body can accept them on its own (translated by MacInnis 1989).

As we shall see in the following chapters, this restriction on interaction with foreign religious organizations casts a shadow over the work of international Christian NGOs in China because they are on the borderline between foreign religious actors and development aid agencies.

The policy of prevention of interaction between Chinese Christians and foreign religious organizations is further reinforced in relation to Catholicism. China severed its relationship with the Vatican in 1951. Many Chinese bishops, priests and laymen who remained loyal to Rome did not recognize the Catholic Patriotic Association, which affirmed the Three-Self campaign and required members to renounce allegiance to the Vatican (Wickeri 1998). Such Catholics formed an underground Catholic Church, and many were arrested. The tension between the centre and the underground church reached its peak when the underground church published *The Thirteen Points* in 1988. This statement declared that sacraments by 'patriotic priests' were invalid (Tang 1992:

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[34] For regulations on contact with foreign religious actors, see *Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi Zonghe Yanjiushi and Guowuyuan Zongjiao Shiwuju Zhengce Fagui Si* [中共中央文献研究室综合研究室、国务院宗教事务局政策法规司] (1995: 273-74).

69; Yao 1993: 142-45).[35] The centre's policy, which prevents people from associating with international religious organizations, hinders the practising of Catholicism, at least from both the Vatican's and underground Catholic church's perspective.

The second factor that restricts freedom of religious belief lies in how the centre understands the nature of religious practice: whether some religious practice exists purely because people participate in it voluntarily, or because it is imposed on the people by their religious leaders. From the centre's perspective, religion is often associated with feudal leaders of religious sects, who have exploited the masses, and with religious privilege. Document 19 argues that:

> In old China ... all religions were manipulated and controlled by the ruling classes, with extremely negative results. Within China, the Buddhist, Daoist, and Islamic leaderships were mainly controlled by the feudal landowners, feudal lords, and reactionary warlords, as well as the bureaucratic capitalistic class. The later foreign colonialist and imperialist forces mainly controlled the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches (translated by MacInnis 1989).

Under the socialist system, 'counter-revolutionaries and wicked elements who wore religious cloaks' are the enemy of the masses, and must be destroyed. What is interesting about the policy documents is that they distinguish between 'the systems of feudal oppression and exploitation in religion' and 'religious beliefs among the people'. For example, Chang Chieh, Vice-chairman, the Chinese Islamic Association, stated in 1962:

> The party's policy on freedom of religious belief is a thorough and overall policy. The overwhelming majority of religious professionals have gained a clear understanding of it as a result of the mass democratic reform of the religious systems, however, a small number of them still entertain doubts about this policy; they think that to abolish the systems of feudal oppression and exploitation in religion is to "abolish religious beliefs among the people." We should help people who entertain this notion to study the Party's policy on freedom of religious belief further, and explain to them that freedom of religious belief is totally different from the use of religion for carrying out feudal oppression and exploitation. Freedom of

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[35] However, Dillon (2001: 15) claims that 'the simplistic division of the Catholic Church in China into the official and the *underground*, the 'patriots' and the 'faithful', masks a complex and changing reality'. Both churches often cooperate at the local level. In addition, the view, which is often emphasized in the media, that Communist China's relationship with the Vatican has deteriorated since the beginning of the Communist regime, begs a more careful examination of the transformation of the relationship, although the Vatican supports the underground churches, and officially announced in March 2000 the canonization of the 120 martyrs of China, who were put to death in the nineteenth century. The conflict between the two has eased to some extent, and now two-thirds of Catholic 'patriotic' priests are also recognized by the Vatican (I thank Fr Jeremy Clarke SJ for this information). Significantly, the Pope also made an historic apology to China, admitting that followers of the Church had been responsible for faults and errors in their past dealings with China. See, *Guardian* (25 October 2001; 6 April 2005). Nevertheless, non-religious factors, such as the Vatican's dealings with Taiwan, sometimes aggravate the relationship between Communist China and the Vatican. For example, the Chinese government expressed 'strong dissatisfaction' at Taiwan President Chen Shuibian's invitation to the funeral of Pope John Paul II. See, *People's Daily* (8 April 2005).

> religious belief concerns the question of ideological belief among the people, and the Party and government will not interfere with, but will protect, the religious belief of the masses of the people and all their legitimate religious activities. The use of religion for carrying out feudal oppression and exploitation is a violation of State law. Therefore, the use of religion for carrying out illegal activities and practicing feudal oppression and exploitation must be resolutely checked (translated by MacInnis 1967: 123-24).

This distinction is important when examining the restriction of religious freedom, because it is often hard to distinguish between 'the systems of feudal oppression and exploitation in religion' and the voluntary devotions and donations by people for religious purposes. There are no clear criteria when distinguishing the one from the other, and this provides the government with a window through which to judge selected religious activity as the acts of counter-revolutionaries.

The third factor that restricts freedom of religious belief is the fact that the government has the right to distinguish between 'normal' religion and 'superstition' (see Gladney 1994). According to Ren Jiyü, 'religion is a longstanding, complicated matter, concerning millions of people of various nationalities', whereas feudal superstition brings 'a heavy burden to peasant family life but also, with very serious damage', affects 'agricultural production, pollutes the social atmosphere, and disturbs social order' and also adversely affects 'the sick, even endangering lives'(1983: 400, 388-89). Tapp (1995: 214) argues that 'the arbitrary distinction between religion and superstition also opens the door to local abuses and high-handedness'. Because of a ban on superstition, the shamanism of the Miao has been illegal since the beginning of the Communist period (Tapp 1995: 214). Article 99 of the Criminal Law of China sets a minimum punishment of five years' imprisonment for those who 'organize or make use of feudal superstitious sects, secret societies or heretical organizations, to conduct anti-revolutionary activity (组织、利用封建迷信、会道门进行反革命活动的，处5年以上有期徒刑) (Quanguo Renda Changweihui Fazhi Gongzuo Weiyuanhui 1994: 925).

One reason for the distinguishing of superstition from religion by the state is that the latter needs to maintain a religious registration system in order to control it. Historically, religions have posed a threat to the Chinese state. There are numerous examples in which religious groups have turned out to be the main protagonists in revolts. For example, Hong Xiuquan (洪秀全), who claimed to be the son of Jesus, led the Taiping Rebellion from 1850 to 1864. The CCP believes it needs to control all religions and prevent any potential for dissidence.

According to Gong (1983: 390), one of the main reasons that superstitious activity has rebounded is that 'peasants lack possession of scientific cultural knowledge and are ignorant and backward'. In fact, not only is superstition dealt with as something to do with being 'not-awakened' (*meiyou jüexing* 没有觉醒) and 'without culture' (*meiyou wenhua* 没有文化) in the discourse; so, too, is religion in general. Some of the scholars and government officials I interviewed revealed that they thought people who believed in religion were usually backward, and were wasting their time in temples and churches; they argued that those who were religious were not as economically efficient as others, and that religion in this sense could be seen as a cause of poverty.

Lam (2004: 7) states that 'the Chinese government formulated the policy of freedom of religious belief not to protect the religious freedom of its citizens, but out of expediency to achieve the goal of its political struggle'. Put differently, the freedom of religious belief is a practical consideration, and only a transitional policy until religion dies out.

Lam's statement, in turn, leads to discussion of the relationship between religion and civilization. The civilizational ideology that endorses the centre-ethnic community relationship hinges on the perception that ethnic communities are culturally and economically backward. 'Cultural backwardness' is attributed to the fact that many of ethnic communities are religious. A textbook on religion states that 'the goal of our Party during the present period of struggle is to build a modernized, high-level, *civilized*, democratic, and socialist nation', and 'it is contrary to the highest ideals of Marxism and our present struggle for a Party member to believe in religion' (MacInnis 1989: 81). Being religious amounts to being culturally backward. Here it is clear that the discourse of the centre espouses the view that the centre's civilization needs to be spread to ethnic communities who are still backward and religious, and demonstrates that the concepts of civilization and religion have been regarded as contradictory in the Communist period.

Conclusions

The centre-ethnic community relationship has transformed significantly from the Qing period to the twenty-first century. The transformation of the relationship demonstrates changes in the understanding of who the centre of civilization is, and what the concept of civilization means in China. The locus of civilization migrated from the Han and Manchu, who were said to have a high standard of culture and ritual, to Western

countries, and then back to the Han, who claim to have experienced class struggle and modernization in the early stages of the Communist period. Most importantly, however, even though these changes took place, the idea that ethnic communities are able to change their status from uncivilized to civilized by achieving greater proximity to the centre and therefore the prevailing civilizational ideology, did not change. In other words, the idea that the ethnic communities, who were recognized as civilizees, could change by education (*jiaohua*) was a consistent belief determining China's centre-ethnic community relationship.

Modernization policy and religious policy also underwent great transformation. With regard to modernization policy, what was seen in the discourse before the Communist period was not *xiandaihua* (modernization) but *xihua* (westernization). This fact demonstrates the strong influence of the West on China. Particularly, from the late nineteenth century to the Republican period, it is no exaggeration to say that the term 'westernization' (*xihua*) was used in the same sense as 'acquiring civilization'. In the Communist period, the term *xiandaihua* was born. This was not the same as *xihua*, because the imperialist and capitalist countries of the West were seen as an enemy until the inception of Deng Xiaoping's Open Door Policy of 1978. The centre's view was that the Han, who were the centre of civilization, were 'modernized' to a much greater extent than minority nationalities and had a responsibility to help the latter modernize. This means that the concept of modernization was understood as having the same directional sense as civilization. This understanding has continued since the implementation of the Open Door Policy. Nevertheless, the question of how modernization differs from westernization in practice remains unanswered. In short, the concept of civilization and the concept of modernization/westernization have mutually complemented each other since the end of the Qing period.

In contrast, the transformation of religious policy over time has been more complicated. In the Qing period, religion in peripheral areas was accorded respect to some degree, but the Confucian civilizational ideology of the centre was defined as being superior to peripheral religion. Put differently, civilization of this period was flexible enough to include different religions as its subordinates, rather than to expel them. In the Republican period, there was no clear central religious policy on peripheral areas. Peripheral religion was dealt with at the local level in practice. However, the anti-religious campaign mentioned above demonstrates the atheist and anti-Christian features of the centre's religious views. Civilization was a Western-centred concept during this period, and the centre strongly opposed the religious aspect of Western

civilization. It is at this point in history that the relationship between the concepts of civilization and religion undergo a strange contortion. The atheist position persisted in the Communist period, based on Marxism. Religion among ethnic communities was respected but only until religion ceased some time in the future. Here, the concept of civilization, which was backed by modernization, and the concept of religion, are diametrically opposite. Explicitly, civilization and modernization are advanced, while religion is backward.

To what extent have Western influences affected this transformation of Chinese perception of civilization? The anti-religious campaign was clearly a counter-reaction to Western civilizational ideology backed by Christianity. However, religious policy in the Communist period derived from a compromise between the atheist ideal, based on Marxism, and the domestic necessity to stabilize the centre-ethnic community relationship. Except for the fact that Marxism is a product of the West, Western civilizational ideology did not have a significant impact on religious policy in the Communist period.

In conclusion, the way in which the Chinese centre understood Western civilization is essential to gaining a broader understanding of the transformation of the Chinese civilizational ideology. As discussed above, Western influences had a significant impact on the Chinese interpretation of civilization and religion. However, over time, the Chinese understanding of Western civilizational ideology has also undergone significant transformation. Just what constitutes Western civilizational ideology in Chinese eyes is a very important and difficult question to answer, but there is no doubt that modernization and Christianity were fundamental factors in Chinese definitions of Western civilizational ideology. However, in the latter half of the Republican period, as Chinese nationalism burgeoned, Western civilizational ideology was understood as something two-horned: as westernization or modernization, which referred to something material, and as religion. The centre in China focused on the former, and embraced Western civilization while downplaying its religious aspects. This way of understanding Western civilization started in the Republican period, and reached its pinnacle in the Communist period, with a boost from Marxism.

This Chinese understanding of Western civilization is very important to following the thread of subsequent chapters, which analyze the impact of Christian missionaries and international Christian NGOs on ethnic communities. The majority of international religious agencies conducting their activities in China have their own version of 'civilization' based on Christianity. When they intervene in China's ethnic communities,

how do local ethnic communities respond to their version of 'civilization'? We will examine these questions in the following chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

EVANGELISM AND ITS UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES: CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES IN THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

This chapter provides an historical account of Christian missionaries working in China during the period from the 1840s to the 1920s. This period witnessed great transformation and turmoil in China, reflected in the Chinese phrase, 'domestic strife, foreign aggression' (*nei you wai huan*内忧外患). Western imperialist aggression forced China to enter into an unequal treaty system in the aftermath of the First Opium War between China and Britain (1839-42), beginning with the Treaty of Nanjing (南京条约) in 1842. In the domestic realm, there occurred a number of rebellions, such as the Taiping Rebellion (1850-64) and the Boxer Rebellion of 1900. Christian missionaries entered China during this period of turmoil and attempted to promote their values among the Chinese people in the country's cities, in the inland and at the periphery.[1]

The literature on China's Christian missionaries debates the theme of 'cultural imperialism'. Some scholars argue that missionaries amounted to nothing more than 'cultural imperialists' because of the relationship they had with their imperial Western governments (Schoppa 2000). Other scholars argue that the sources of conflict in which missionaries featured were often local, and were not necessarily related to Western imperialism (Sweeten 2001). For the purpose of this thesis, which is to gain a more nuanced and deeper understanding of the 'civilizing mission', this chapter firstly draws on this debate by exploring the extent to which the unequal treaty system affected the interaction between missionaries and local communities in China. The unequal treaty system shaped inter-state relations between China and the Western states. Much

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[1] The presence of Christian missionaries in China dates back to the seventh century, when Nestorianism was introduced during the reign of Tai Tsung in the Tang Dynasty (Standaert 2001: 18-23; Latourette 1929: 53). Nestorianism takes its name from Nestorius (c. 382-451), Patriarch of Constantinople (appointed in 428), whom Rome and Constantinople condemned as a Christian heretic because of his belief Christ had distinct human and divine persons. The followers of Nestorius, known as Nestorians, established themselves in the Persian Empire, and spread their missionaries all over Central Asia, including the Tang capital Chang'an, today's Xi'an (Standaert 2001: 1). Roman Catholic missions to China began in the thirteenth century (Standaert 2001: 71-78). A very well-known Jesuit missionary, Matteo Ricci, contributed not only to an increase in the number of Christian converts in China but also to the introduction of the knowledge of Western mathematics and astronomy, and world geography to China (Standaert 2001: 309-13; Spence 1984: 142-49). According to Standaert (2001), the Chinese Christian population swelled from less than 1,000 in 1600 to 217,000 by 1815. With regard to the contribution of the Christian missionaries to the introduction of knowledge of Western science, including mathematics, geometry, trigonometric, and astronomy, see Needham's seminal compilation of research on science and civilization in China (Needham 1971).

literature dealing with Christian missionaries in China emphasizes this close association with their own imperial Western governments, and therefore assumes that the China-Western state inter-state relationship significantly affected the interaction between individual missionaries and China's local communities (Cuthbertson 1987; Pyenson 1985: 312-16; Nan 1971: 56-57). In order to properly understand the interaction between the Christian missionaries and the ethnic communities, it is important to investigate how the privileges arising from the unequal treaty system actually affected local interaction.

Second, this chapter highlights the complex nature of the Christian missionaries' perception of civilization. Such perception had various layers relating to Christianity and Western civilization. It is important to unpack these ideologies because the way in which they became intertwined in practice affords us an important insight into the nature of the 'civilizing mission'.

Third, this chapter investigates how a particular Christian missionary interacted with certain ethnic communities living on China's periphery, using the three frames of interaction. It highlights the fact that the features of the interaction between the missionary and the ethnic communities do not wholly fit within any single one of the three frames; in fact, depending on which of the multiple communities within the village one focuses on, the features of the interaction between the missionary and the particular community reflect one or another of all three frames of interaction.

There are two reasons for focusing in this chapter on British Protestant missionaries. The first is that the British Protestant missions formed a large percentage of Protestant missions overall in the period in question.[2] American missions also made up a substantial portion. However, Britain's influence on China during this period was more significant than that of the United States. It forms the backdrop to the local site investigation. The second reason for focusing on Protestant missionaries, as opposed to Catholic missionaries, derives from my attempt to ensure historical consistency.[3] Part Two of this thesis deals with three case-studies: the Jian Hua Foundation and The Salvation Army are Protestant entities, or at least are closely related to Protestantism,

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2 In 1874, according to Latourette (1929: 406), 48 per cent of Protestant missions were American, and 44.5 per cent were British. Only 7.5 per cent were German. In 1889, 56.5 per cent were British, and 39.5 per cent were American. Only 4 per cent came from the Continent of Europe.

3 The literature is very much divided into research on French Catholics and research on British Protestants. There exists scant literature comparing the two. As noted by Lutz (1996: 99), this is 'partly because of difference in the locales of resource materials and differences in the native languages of the missionaries and their writings'. As a consequence, there is little sense of proportion and balance in analysis that aims to generate a broader understanding of missionary ideology.

and the other, Oxfam, has Protestant (specifically Quaker) origins. In addition, The Salvation Army and Oxfam have their international headquarters in Britain.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section briefly provides an historical background to Christian missionary operations in China. In the main, it aims to explain how the unequal treaty system supported missionary activity from the mid-nineteenth century to the end of the treaty system in 1943. The second section examines the complex nature of the ideologies that the British missionaries sought to promote in China. The third section of this chapter uses a case-study approach to focus on the work of British Protestant missionary Samuel Pollard in Stone Gateway (*Shimenkan* 石门坎) in Western Guizhou.

This chapter argues that the assumption that Christian missionaries proselytized China's local communities on the basis of strong ties to Western imperial governments and on the strength of their own religious ideologies is 'distortingly simplistic' (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991: 8). This simplistic assumption firstly ignores the quite limited extent to which the inter-state relationship affected the interaction between individual missionaries and local communities. This chapter identifies an interesting shift in missionaries' perception of what values should be promoted in their activity, away from solely promoting Christianity and towards promoting 'Western civilization', with particular emphasis on advanced technology, mixed with Christianity.

This chapter also argues that the interaction that occurred in the three communities in the case study village reflects the features of one or other of all three of the frames of interaction. The three communities in question are those of the Han, the Nosu and the Hua Miao. The interaction between Pollard and the Han and Nosu communities, who were higher in the social hierarchy of the village in which he worked, reflected the features of the conflict frame, while his interaction with the Hua Miao community, in its position at the bottom of the hierarchy, initially reflected the features of the adaptation frame, and later evolved to reflect those of the middle ground frame. In demonstrating this, this chapter introduces the concept of 'preferred' and 'downplayed' community.

Missionaries in the Unequal Treaty System from 1842 to 1943

This section briefly outlines the unequal treaty system and identifies how the system directly related to the activities of the Christian missionaries. The 1842 Treaty of Nanjing was the first in a series of unequal treaties negotiated by Britain and the Qing

Dynasty.[4] No provision in this treaty related particularly to Christian missionaries. However, because missionaries were foreigners, they naturally benefited from some of the treaty clauses (Cohen 1978: 550). For example, the opening of the five port cities (Canton, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Ningbo, and Shanghai) to residence by British subjects and their families obviously enabled the British missionaries to reside there as well.[5]

The 1844 Treaty of Huangpu (黄埔条约), negotiated by France and the Qing Dynasty (Morse 1910: 331), contained a number of important additions that affected the Christian missionaries, including the right to hire sites for the construction of hospitals, churches and cemeteries in the five treaty ports (Article 17) and the principle of extraterritoriality (Article 21). The latter Article, in particular, had a significant impact on missionary activity in the interior: 'Missionary work in the interior, while still illegal, was rendered less dangerous by the stipulation that, if foreigners were found away from the treaty ports, they were simply to be conducted to the nearest consul' (Cohen 1978: 550). Importantly, Western imperial countries were able to obtain one-sided most-favoured-nation (MFN) status under terms agreed in the treaty. This meant that if France gained some benefit, the same benefit was automatically gained by all other MFN participants under the terms of the treaty in question.

In the aftermath of the Arrow War in 1856 (also called the second Opium War), the Western powers and the Qing Dynasty negotiated the 1858 Treaty of Tianjin (天津条约).[6] Article 13 of the Treaty guaranteed that French missionaries could 'travel anywhere inside China ... with valid passports, and within thirty miles of treaty ports without passports' (Spence 1990: 180; Cohen 1978: 553). This clause afforded significant advantage to missionaries intending to conduct their activity in the Chinese interior, including the British missionaries because of the MFN status they enjoyed.

The unequal treaty system remained in effect until 1943, and there is no doubt that it provided Christian missionaries with significant opportunity to preach in the Chinese interior, something they took advantage of until the early 1950s. This does not necessarily suggest, however, that the missionaries were able to proselytize without

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4 For the text of all articles in the treaties, see Wang (1957: 30-32).

5 Before the treaty system, the Qing Dynasty, which had its own civilizational ideology, was threatened by the existence of Christian missionaries, and therefore it banned Christian missionaries from entering the country freely and preaching Christianity to its people. However, the treaty system ensured the legal status of Christian missionaries in China, and led to significant growth in the number of missionaries. There were about 250 European Catholics priests by 1870, and the figure jumped to 886 by 1900 (Cohen 1978: 554). This period was a pioneering one for Protestants, and the increase in the number of Protestant missionaries (from 189 in 1860 to 3445 in 1905) was significant (Cohen 1978: 555).

6 Wang (1957: 104-112) has all articles of the 1858 Treaty of Tianjin.

constraint and simply impose Christianity upon the ethnic communities living on China's periphery. I will come back to the issue of the unequal treaty system, and discuss how it directly affected the local interaction between an individual missionary and several ethnic communities in the case-study section of this chapter. As a way of setting the scene, it is first important to investigate the kinds of civilizational ideology the Christian missionaries attempted to promote in China.

The Merging of Christianity into 'Western Civilization'

In seeking to identify how the missionaries perceived what kind of values they should promote among China's local communities, it is helpful to begin by reviewing the debate among missionaries that took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The debate was about what kind of values and beliefs missionaries should attempt to promote in China. It began in the late nineteenth century, and it grew increasingly heated at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In the nineteenth century, the majority of the so-called evangelist Protestant missionaries in China conceptualized the term 'civilization' as referring exclusively to Western civilization, perceiving of it as something materialistic and separate from Christianity. In the view of the evangelists, their objective was simply to preach the Gospel to the heathens in China who had never heard of it.[7] Griffith John, a representative of the London Missionary Society, revealed this understanding of 'civilization' in outlining the objective of his mission activity:

> We are here, not to develop the resources of the country, not for the advancement of commerce, not for the mere promotion of civilization; but to do battle with the powers of darkness, to save men from sin, and conquer China for Christ (John 1877: 11; cited in Cohen 1978: 555).

This perception of 'civilization' as something separate from the missionary objective of conquering China for Christ was also shared by the China Inland Mission (CIM), founded by Hudson Taylor in 1865.[8] According to Latourette (1929: 386), 'the main purpose of the Mission was ... to diffuse as quickly as possible a knowledge of the Gospel throughout the (Chinese) Empire'. The CIM was significant among the Protestant missions in China, and had eight hundred and twenty-five member missionaries and associates by 1905 (Pollock 1962: 9).

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[7] In the nineteenth century there was a sense of urgency about the Protestant missions. The end of the world was to come soon, so the missionaries had to spread the message of the Gospel as quickly as possible.

[8] There are numerous biographies of Hudson Taylor. See Pollock (1962).

By way of contrast, a small number of missionaries working in nineteenth century China emphasized the importance of what amounted to secular activity. This included such things as education, medical work and disaster relief. This kind of activity was not unrelated to the religious ideologies of these missionaries, but it could be recognized as 'the introduction of every wholesome feature of Western civilization' (Latourette 1929: 387), understood as a combination of material civilization and Christianity. For example, Timothy Richard, a British missionary from the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS), conducted famine relief activity in Zhili (直隶) in North China in the 1880s (Bohr 1972; Garnier 1945; Soothill 1924). Richard's approach can best be described as first-generation mission work relevant to the understanding of Western civilization as a combination of the material aspects of civilization (education, medical work and disaster relief etc), and Christianity. According to Bohr (1972: 118):

> Richard's vision of the "Kingdom of God in China" amounted to a theologically informed programme of modernization, which called for the reform of Chinese thought and institutions through the adoption of the salient elements of Western civilization: science, technology and Christianity.

Importantly, one can recognize that from Richard's 1880s perspective Christianity and the concept of Western civilization were already merging.

At the time, however, the merging of Christianity into the concept of Western civilization was not yet recognized as a legitimate way to approach mission activity, and the merged understanding proved much less popular than the evangelism practised by the Western church community. At China's Protestant Conferences in 1877 and 1890, for example, differences in the approaches of Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard led the former to strongly criticize the latter's thinking 'as unorthodox and a betrayal of the principles of Christianity' (Rabe 1978: 177-78; Soothill 1924: 118). Furthermore, Richard's home board, the BMS, withdrew from him its support (Whyte 1988: 136).

Although many church communities in the West criticized Richard's approach to mission work, the twentieth century witnessed a rise in the popularity of his approach, understood as the preaching of the so-called Social Gospel. In the early twentieth century, the nature of British Protestant missions underwent a great transformation away from fundamentalism towards liberalism. The debate between fundamentalists and liberalists within Christian churches in the US and Britain grew increasingly significant,[9] and divided many of them along fundamentalist and liberalist lines. [10]

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[9] The majority of literature uses the term 'fundamentalist,' as opposed to 'liberal'. 'Liberalism' and 'modernism' have theologically different meanings but they are often used interchangeably in the

According to Hutchison (1974: 111), the debate started partly as a result of the experiences of the missionaries in encountering different cultures in non-Western areas, but mainly as a result of the dawn of the 'scientific era', which had its genesis in the Enlightenment movement that began in eighteenth century Europe.[11]

The liberalists characteristically considered profession less vital than performance, and considered either individual or social salvation largely a function of 'good news' (Hutchison 1974: 111-12). Walter Rauschenbusch, a well-known liberal theologian, rethought the implications of the gospel. In his work *Christianizing the Social Order* (1912), he articulated the view that the social task of the church was to work to end human suffering by establishing social justice. The theology that placed emphasis on the social implications of the Gospel, and on the social tasks of the Christian churches, was called the Social Gospel.[12] In other words, the Social Gospel attempted to relieve suffering by providing Christianity combined with Western civilization, rather than just Christianity by itself.

The Social Gospel approach was heavily criticized by the fundamentalists because it captured all the aspects of 'Western culture', including, as fundamentalists perceived, 'drinking, materialism, and vice, as Americans practised them at home' (Hutchison 1974: 120). The fundamentalist objection to liberalism was not 'is it effective?' but 'is it Christianity?' Just as common in the fundamentalist argument was a determination to separate Christianity from 'Western civilization'. W. H. Griffith Thomas, for example, wrote that 'our sound missionaries have gone to China to proclaim the everlasting Gospel ... and not to vindicate any civilization. There is much in Western civilization which, because it is not Christian, is not worth vindication' (1921: 670-71). Rabe (1978: 177-78) also argues that as far as the fundamentalists were concerned, the desirable path was 'to emphasize the distinction between secular and spiritual kingdoms and to restrict

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sociological and historical literature. A similar movement went on within Catholicism, but the papal encyclical *Pascendi Gregis* served to halt the progress of the Catholic modernists (Whyte 1988: 136).

[10] The majority of literature uses the term 'fundamentalist,' as opposed to 'liberal'. 'Liberalism' and 'modernism' have theologically different meanings but they are often used interchangeably in the sociological and historical literature. A similar movement went on within Catholicism, but the papal encyclical *Pascendi Gregis* served to halt the progress of the Catholic modernists (Whyte 1988: 136).

[11] Within the theological literature there are numerous studies on the development of modernism. See, Sawyer (2003) Also, for material on the relationship between Christian missions and the Enlightenment, see Stanley (2001) and Bosch (1991). In Stanley's edited book (2001), Stanley (2001), Erlank (2001) and Maxwell (2001) explore the relationship between civilization and Christianity in the context of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

[12] The Social Gospel appeared in the context of the emerging urbanization of eighteenth century Britain and nineteenth century America. The industrial revolution thrust the problems of urban society upon nations that had until then been primarily rural, and brought about poverty, injustice and oppression. Liberal Protestants attempted to apply biblical principles to these problems (Cui 1998: 8; Sawyer 1998: 10).

mission work to the simple proclamation of Christ's gospel for mankind'. The attempt by the fundamentalists to restrict mission work to that embedded merely in Christianity contradicts the conventional view, which holds that fundamentalists sought to spread Western culture to a greater degree than did liberalists. Liberalists, in fact, sought to transform the whole of society on the basis of their Western civilizational ideologies, which represented so much more than merely religious ideology.

The combination of Christianity and Western civilization in liberal mission activity was understood by the fundamentalists as being problematic, yet an increasing number of liberal Christian missionaries actually mixed Christianity and Western civilizational ideology into their mission activity. The idea of the Social Gospel was spread widely not only among British and American missionaries, but also among Chinese Christians.[13] David Yui, the General Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in China, also supported the idea of the Social Gospel:

> In anticipating the types of Chinese Christian leadership needed in the near future, we need to lay more emphasis on the development of Christian social leadership. This type of leadership, if properly directed, will produce very great results. We do not want to limit Christian life only to attendance at church and prayer meetings. We want it to touch on all respects the community life. Until it succeeds in doing this, it will not reach its full power in the lives of men. This at once shows us the necessity of developing a social type of Christian leadership (quoted in Kepler [1920] 1965: 17).

Appreciation of the Social Gospel idea resulted in a change in the nature of missionary activity in China in the early twentieth century, from evangelism to social and development work. According to Latourette, 'by 1911, less than half the total missionary staff was engaged in direct fundamentalistic work, and the proportion would have been still smaller had not the great majority of the members of the China Inland Mission ... been in that type of activity' (1929: 619). In particular, the Social Gospel had a significant impact on education, through which the missionaries 'could educate the Christian community', and most effectively 'make a Christian impression on the country' (Latourette 1929: 625). The number of pupils in mission schools increased significantly over time: in 1877, 5,917 pupils were in mission schools; in 1889, 16,836; in 1911, 102,533; and in 1915, 169,707 pupils (Latourette 1929: 623). In addition to their work in education, the liberal Christian missionaries were involved also in medical work, in relief, and in social reform.

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[13] For instance, A. R. Kepler ([1920] 1965), an American Presbyterian missionary in China, expressed support for the Social Gospel.

It is obvious that this more sophisticated kind of work required more specialized knowledge and skills. Although the ethos of Christianity was important to the objectives of the Christian missions, in reality, skilled people without a theological background were also employed to conduct 'mission activity'. Christian missions became more of professional organizations, and a higher degree of institutionalization was necessary. The institutionalization of educational and medical work began in the 1880s and continued into the twentieth century, by which time these practitioners had become 'in increasing number no longer just Christian missionaries but missionary specialists' (Hyatt 1966: 115).[14]

One can argue that this educational and medical work amounted to the secularization of the missions. The evangelical missionaries, who devoted themselves simply to preaching the message of the Gospel, languished among accusations of being old-fashioned. Latourette clearly demarcates the three-dimensional aspects of this new type of mission activity:

> There was the possibility that Protestant Christianity would be swamped by institutions, that the energies of missionaries and Chinese Christians would be absorbed in the machinery of organization, and that the Church would forget that its primary function was to serve as a vehicle for a religious and spiritual message.... This tendency was reënforced [*sic*] by the fact that institutions more and more demanded specialists – teachers, nurses, and physicians – whose professional training had crowded out careful preparation in theology, philosophy, the Bible, and kindred subjects. Protestantism was threatened with secularisation (1929: 618).

The trinity of institutionalization, professionalization and secularization that began in the 1920s actually remains relevant to the work of Christian NGOs working in China today.

In summary, the Protestant missionaries' understanding of their own ideology transformed over time. The ideology of the fundamentalists, the majority of nineteenth century British missionaries, was a direct evangelical Christian one In contrast, that of the liberalists added Western civilization, underpinned by modernization, to its direct evangelical Christian ideology. Somewhat paradoxically, the fundamentalist Christians

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[14] Anecdotally, the Social Gospel opened up opportunities for an increasing number of Chinese to participate in mission activity. This can be seen in the increasing involvement of Chinese Christians in the Social Gospel movement, represented by the YMCAs and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and the Student Relief Committees associated with them. The Social Gospel led to a greater indigenization of Christianity than occurred by purely evangelical mission activity. In fact, many church leaders in Communist China emerged from the Social Gospel movement (Hunter and Chan 1993: 125). For example, Bishop K. H. Ting, a founder of the Amity Foundation, was working on one of the Student Relief Committees. This point is very important to an understanding of the continuation of Christian activity throughout the twentieth century, even after the significant breakdown of religious activity at the beginning of the Communist period.

of that time attempted to limit the scope of civilizational ideology, whereas the liberal counterparts attempted to enlarge it by including Western civilization in their work.

What the fundamentalists and liberalists had in common was a belief that their respective values and beliefs that they attempted to spread (either based on Christianity or a mixture of Christianity and Western civilization) were superior to any values and beliefs they encountered in local communities in China, and that their ideologies could bring about a better world in those communities. The next section concentrates on one village in China's southwest province of Guizhou, where the British Protestant missionary, Samuel Pollard, worked in the early twentieth century. It explores the civilizational ideology he believed would bring about a better world. It also explores his interaction with the ethnic communities of the village.

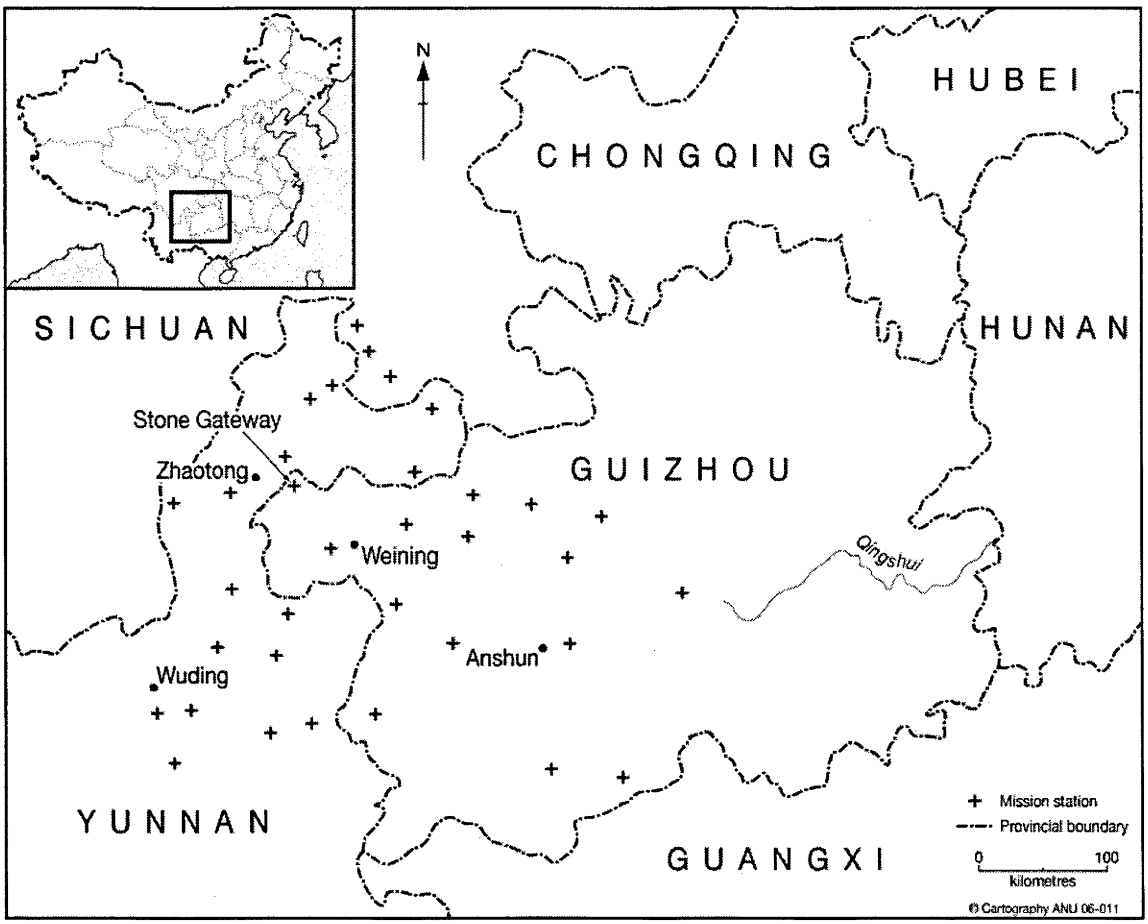
Samuel Pollard and China's Ethnic Communities

Pollard is a missionary well known for his mass conversion to Christianity of the Hua Miao community in a village surrounding the place called 'Stone Gateway' (See Map 3.1 and Photograph 3.1). According to Hudspeth (1922: 702-05), he converted about seventy thousand Hua Miao to Christianity, and baptized fifteen thousand between 1904 and 1915.

Why examine a single case involving a significant number of apparently peaceful converts instead of looking at conflicts arising from the well-known 'missionary cases' (*jiao'an* 教案), in which local people killed several missionaries?[15] Pollard's case was not the peaceful conversion one might assume. The interaction between Pollard and each of the ethnic communities in the Stone Gateway area offers a range of interesting features that fit into one or other of the three frames of interaction. A specific focus on this particular one helps us to better understand the nuances in the interaction between missionaries and ethnic communities on China's periphery. The case also has been researched by both anthropologists and historians, and therefore offers many useful

[15] In the English literature, *jiao'an* is translated as missionary cases (Sweeten 2001 and 1996); anti-Christian incidents (Daigle 2005); and sectarian cases (Litzinger 1983). The *jiao'an* refers to the situation in which 'conflict occurred as a result of actions between religious groups and local people, and invoked negotiations' at the local or/and national levels (行动冲突发生与民教之间，因而引起交涉) (Chen 1991: 3). Usually local officers dealt with such incidents in the first instance. When they could not settle them, higher levels of government dealt with them (Chen 1991: 156). In fact, systematic and basic studies on missionary cases are underdeveloped. There remain questions including how many incidents the central government dealt with as court cases and how many incidents there existed in which conflict occurred that was settled without government intervention.

Map 3.1: The Stone Gateway



Source: Shen (1999).

studies to draw on. It further offers the opportunity to make historical comparisons with contemporary NGO activities: Stone Gateway is only twenty kilometres away from the village of Zhaotong, the location of The Salvation Army case study presented in Chapter Five.

Pollard's Missionary Work and the Shift in His Activity

Samuel Pollard was born in Camelford in England in 1864, and became a minister of the Bible Christian Church, which made up the United Methodist Church, in 1907 (Livingstone 2000: 70; Grist 1971; Kendall 1954). At the age of twenty-two, he applied to become a missionary after reading a book on David Livingstone, a missionary who had preached the Gospel in Africa. This book inspired Pollard, and led him to seek work overseas (Hayes 1947: 10; Gooch and Rao 1939: 4). Pollard's motive to become a

Photograph 3.1: Stone Gateway

Source: Grist (1971: 212).
Note: The original caption says, 'How "Stone Gateway" (Shih-Men-K'an) Got Its Name'.

Photograph 3.2: The Miao and Samuel Pollard

Source: Grist (1971: 84).

missionary, and the motive of his organization to send him to China, was simply to preach the Gospel. The vision he had seen of China's uncounted millions waiting for Christ was inescapable (Hayes 1947: 12). Following on from the discussion above, Pollard was basically a fundamentalist missionary when he began his mission activity. It was not his intention in the initial stages to promote 'Western civilization'.

Pollard started working in Zhaotong, northeast of Yunnan, in 1888 and stayed there until 1915, when he died of typhoid fever.[16] His missionary work can be divided into rough two periods, one from 1884 to 1904, and the other from 1904 to 1915; his activity in the first of these two periods contrasted sharply with that in the second period. Initially, he relied on direct evangelization in city areas such as Zhaotong and Yunnan Fu (today's provincial capital Kunming). Initially, he preached the Gospel in the busy parts of the city, punctuating his pronouncements with musical gongs. This method attracted the attention of onlookers, but not to the extent that they converted to Christianity on the spot. He also carried out some medical work and established mission schools, but did both on a minor scale only. From a simple numerical point of view, Pollard's work was not successful insofar as he converted only fifteen people to Christianity in this earlier period of Pollard's preaching, according to Hudspeth (1922: 702-05).

By contrast, Pollard's activity during the period 1904 to 1915, which is the main focus of the rest of this chapter, was characterized by indirect evangelisation in rural areas. The opportunity to change his mission strategy arose unexpectedly from a letter written by James Adam of the CIM, who worked in the city of Anshun in western Guizhou (See Map 3.1). In 1903, a group of four Hua Miao met Adam, and heard him speaking about Jesus.[17] Their interest in what he had to say grew, and over time more and more Hua Miao travelled to Anshun to hear about Jesus. However, Adam realized that it took the Hua Miao nine days to reach Anshun, and knew that the village of the Hua Miao was closer to Zhaotong, where Pollard was preaching the Gospel. Adam

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[16] The province of Yunnan was chosen as a project site after consultation with the CIM (Hayes 1947: 11). The CIM played a consultancy role in relation to projects by Protestant missions in China's inland. Even though various denominations working in China's inland had different origins and theoretical standpoints, they cooperated with each other, and their work merged into a similar kind of activity in practice. In other words, the denominational difference did not really matter in the local context, at least within the Protestant community (Hutchinson 1974: 110).

[17] The Hua Miao fall under the category of the Miao nationality under the Communist regime. However, as Tapp (2001) argues, the category Miao was created in the process of the ethnic identification project of the Communists. According to him, Miao consisted of Hmong, A Hmao, Hmu, and Qho Xiong peoples. The Hmong is known in Chinese as Bai Miao (white Miao), Qing Miao (blue Miao), or Xiao Hua Miao (small flowery Miao). A Hmao is known in Chinese as Da Hua Miao (big flowery Miao). Pollard preached Da Hua Miao (Tapp 2001: 71).

therefore wrote a letter to Pollard suggesting that Pollard begin to preach the Gospel in Zhaotong. The four Hua Miao people delivered the letter to Pollard and sought further information about Jesus. Pollard treated them very kindly. After they had talked to other villagers about their experience, many flocked in large numbers to Zhaotong to see and hear Pollard (Zhang 1992: 47-49; Grist 1971: 179).

When the Hua Miao began to gather attentively around Pollard seeking more information about Jesus, Pollard preached the Gospel to them; in other words, he simply promoted Christianity rather than promoting it in combination with Western civilization. His initial motive for going to China, it will be recalled, was simply to convert people to Christianity. As outlined in the comparison between Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard, the majority of Protestant missionaries in China in the 1900s still supported the idea of direct evangelization in a way that separated 'Western civilization' from Christianity. So did the Methodist Church, to which Pollard belonged.

However, as the interaction between Pollard and the ethnic communities evolved, Pollard began to undertake activity that could be understood as being more related to 'Western civilization'. It is important to note that Pollard, a so-called fundamentalist missionary, did not *intend* to actively promote Western civilization within the ethnic communities. An unintended consequence of his promoting Christianity was the simultaneous but inadvertent promoting of 'Western civilization'.

One example to illustrate how 'Western civilization' was promoted in practice is Pollard's attempt to develop an education system (Shi 2000; Shen 1999: 25). According to Grist (1971: 277):

> Pollard promptly recognised that preaching the Gospel is only one part of the manifold functions of a Missionary Society. Without a well-organized and efficient system of education, under enlightened Christian control, for those who are to become ministers and teachers, the Great awakening in China may lose its Christian significance and dwindle to comparative nothingness.

As a consequence, Pollard established a curriculum that introduced subjects not previously taught, and mixed religious teaching with 'ordinary (Western science) subjects' (Grist 1971: 279). For boys, these included 'arithmetic, geography, simple science; such as can be illustrated by the surroundings; Scripture, theology, elementary church history; how to teach, preach, and organize church work; mission methods' (Grist 1971: 279-80). For girls, these included training in 'school teaching, home work, cooking, washing, babies, sewing, Sunday-school teaching, elementary hygiene, etc.' (Grist 1971: 284). Even though Pollard began his missionary career as a fundamentalist,

he eventually began to promote Western civilization through the medium of his education system, as a result of his interaction with the ethnic communities.

The Impact on Ethnic Community Identity

The work that Pollard undertook, in which he promoted both Christianity and 'Western civilization', was perceived by the ethnic communities in the Stone Gateway area in a variety of ways. To understand why ethnic community perceptions varied, it is necessary to examine these ethnic communities.

The reader will recall that in Chapter One 'community' was described as a process of boundary making, affected by interaction with outsiders; this process constitutes community identity, with a shared understanding of the prevailing social hierarchy. Before Pollard's encounter with the Hua Miao in the Stone Gateway area, the community was made up of three ethnic groups, the Hua Miao, the Nosu (today's Yi) and the Han.[18] Even though the Hua Miao and Nosu had different beliefs and different political and economic status, they lived in a community, and shared a common understanding of the prevailing social hierarchy within the community. Underneath the broader multi-ethnic community, which consisted of three ethnic groups, each individual ethnic group consisted of a single ethnic community, based on the following distinguishing differences.

The supremacy and wealth of the Han were most prominent. They 'concentrated in walled cities, towns, marketplaces, and villages along the main transport routes' (Cheung 1995: 230). The Nosu, as the middle stratum, did not have as much power and wealth as the Han in the city areas, but they maintained their independence in the mountain areas.[19] They lived in castle strongholds high in the mountains inhibited by the Miao (Clarke 1911). The Hua Miao were at the bottom of the hierarchy, and many of them were the serfs of Nosu overlords. They were obliged to pay 'rents, levies, corvee, and various other obligations' (Cheung 1995: 229-30; Grist 1971: 159; Clarke 1911: 123-24). Pollard wrote of the Hua Miao in his diary in November 1904 that 'economically, they were subjugated to a marginal livelihood; any accumulation of wealth could not escape the eyes of the rapacious overlords' (quoted in Kendall 1954: 83-84). Their children were sometimes seized by the overlord to work as household

[18] They called themselves 'Nosu' (Clarke 1911: 113).

[19] The Nosu maintained chieftainship (*tumu* 土目, or *tingmu* 亭目) even though the Qing undertook the policy of *gaitu guiliu* (Concise History 1985: 128). The Nosu fought against the Manchurian invasion in the eighteenth century. Consequently, they left the city area and moved into the mountains in order to maintain their independence (Grist 1971: 158-60).

slaves (Kendall 1954: 133), and sometimes treated as private property of the overlord in land transactions (Zhou et al. 1982: 336). Also, slaves were tortured by the Nosu landlord, and obliged to prostrate themselves in reverence before the overlord's family gods (Kendall 1954: 133). In short, there existed a clear hierarchy between the Nosu and the Hua Miao in the Stone Gateway area.

At the outset, Pollard meant to evangelize indiscriminately within the broader community, but in reality, his activity led to a mass conversion of the particular Hua Miao community to Christianity. At one level, this amounted to nothing more than the formerly animist Hua Miao adapting to Christianity as a result of Pollard's teaching. At another level, however, the features reflected in the interaction between Pollard and the Hua Miao community went beyond those that simply fit the adaptation frame. A number of unintended consequences arose, reflecting in the Hua Miao community features that fit only the middle ground frame.

Two features vividly reflect the middle ground frame. Firstly, Pollard's cooperation with the Hua Miao to produce a Bible in the Hua Miao script led to the reshaping of the Hua Miao ethnic identity. Pollard created the Miao script using the mixture of Braille, shorthand, Hebrew and script developed from the Cree Indians in North America (Enwall 1994). His aim was to enable the Hua Miao people to read the Bible (Shi 2000: Diamond 1996).

However, learning to read had an enormous impact on the Hua Miao perception of their power relationship with the Han and the Nosu. The Hua Miao recognized quickly that 'writing was linked to power as well as to special knowledge, and that it [had been] almost inaccessible to the Miao' (Diamond 1996: 141), because writing was 'testimony' to the cultural superiority of the Han (Cheung 1995: 241). Therefore, the gaining of a written language had a significant impact on Hua Miao perception of their social status and place in the social hierarchy in relation to the other ethnic communities living in the Stone Gateway area, namely, the Han and the Nosu. It was an epoch-making paradigm shift for the Hua Miao. The impact on Hua Miao perception of their social and power relationships is reflected in Moseley's argument as follows:

> Christianity was very attractive to the animistic hill people ... for it made possible feelings of equality and self-respect which had been denied them by the arrogant plainsmen. These sentiments were reinforced by the loss of prestige, in the eyes of the hill peoples, of Chinese ... by comparison with the modern civilization of the West ... Christian influence among the uplanders of Yunnan and Kwangsi persisted into the Communist period (quoted in Swain 1995: 140).

The fact that Pollard created the ethnic script for the Miao made possible the development of various Miao communities, including those ethnic groups close to Hua Miao—specifically Bai Miao, Qing Miao and Hei Miao, who were formerly scattered over the region (Diamond 1996). It led to the creation of a new sense of identity in the broader Miao community located in the wider region of Southwest China; and it led to the strengthening of the specific Hua Miao community in the Stone Gateway area. Within the new broader Miao community and within the narrower community in the Stone Gateway area, the Miao language amounted to a lingua franca to be used by those who wanted to attend the local schools established by Pollard's mission, including members of the Han and Nosu communities (Diamond 1996: 157).

Beyond the Stone Gateway, based on the hierarchical relationship of the Han, the Nosu and the Hua Miao, Hua Miao church leaders 'who had the competence to acquire knowledge of the Bible, as well as physical and mental ability to preach' had close contact with other church leaders in other villages. They frequently met to discuss matters concerning the wider Christian community beyond the village level (Cheung 1995: 242). Put simply, by becoming literate, the Hua Miao community rose from the bottom of the hierarchy in the Stone Gateway community to become a Christian Hua Miao ethnic community with a stronger sense of identity. As Cheung (1996: 243) states, '[t]he small, scattered, loosely-related villages became connected through the church network'. The reshaping of Hua Miao identity clearly reflects features of the 'middle ground' frame, in the sense that this was something neither Pollard nor the Hua Miao community in the Stone Gateway area had expected would happen. A reshaping of Hua Miao identity occurred as a result of the interaction between Pollard and that community.

The second feature that reflects the middle ground frame is the literacy education provided to the Hua Miao. It was this literacy education that introduced the idea of the 'nation-state' to the Miao. Pollard wrote 'the Hua Miao Literacy Text' so the Hua Miao could learn the script, and in it he wrote the following passages:

> What is the Hua Miao? The Hua Miao is an old nationality of China.
> What is China? China is an old state in the world.
> Where was the Hua Miao from? The Hua Miao was from the Yellow River of inland China (quoted in Shen 1999: 42-43).

Shi (2000) and Zhang (1992: 148) claim that words such as 'state', 'citizen' and 'society' did not exist in the original Hua Miao language, but that through church education, the Hua Miao acquired recognition and an understanding of such concepts.

This also led the Hua Miao to struggle for official recognition of their minority status in the Republic of China. Pollard in fact complained about the Republican national flag and its five coloured stripes representing the five recognized nationalities in China, because it did not include the Hua Miao (Hong 1999: 43; Zhang 1992: 149).[20] When Pollard began his missionary activity in the area around Stone Gateway, it was likely that nobody would have imagined that he would undertake the task of nurturing the Hua Miao in their struggle for national recognition. In short, Pollard's missionary work had a significant impact on Hua Miao ethnic identity. Thus, the interaction between Pollard and the Hua Miao clearly reflect features of the middle ground frame.

Missionary influence on the strengthening of ethnic communities is not unique to this village, or to a Chinese context. Some scholars (Shen 1999; Tapp 1989) argue that Christianity enabled traditional identity and modern state identity to reflect the features of the middle ground frame. For example, in his analysis of the White Hmong of Northern Thailand, Tapp (1989: 85) contends that:

> Christianity offers to its minority converts an ideology which *transcends* the primary alternatives of assimilation to a Thai identity or the retention of a sense of Hmong ethnic identity, and thus properly speaking represents a third, or resolving, alternative to the possibilities of the continuation of pantheistic Hmong shamanism or the adoption of the state religion of Thailand.

This is a very intriguing and contentious view because it implies that globalizing forces do not necessarily lead to a weakened sense of ethnic identity. This is one example of so-called 'glocalization' (Robertson 1995), the idea that globalizing forces are localized and therefore further facilitate local diversity.

At the same time, the fact that tensions were an apparent result of missionary influence in the Stone Gateway area should not be overlooked. The Nosu were not overly interested in Christianity because they enjoyed a higher degree of power and status than the Hua Miao in the community hierarchy. According to Hong, powerful ethnic groups such as the Nosu did not 'like to accept foreign religions and considered them as heresy or paganism' (1999: 22). The Han and Nosu were less receptive of the ideology Pollard sought to promote, and therefore Christianity did not spread to them.

The interaction between Pollard and the Han and Nosu communities not only led to the situation in which Christianity became unpopular among these communities, but

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[20] For more on the struggle for official recognition by the Hua Miao elite in the 1930s and 1940s, see Cheung (2004). The concept of 'state', new to the Hua Miao language, grew to become significant in the minds of at least some of the Hua Miao. Just after the Republic of China was established in 1911, one of the Hua Miao creators of the Pollard Script, Yang Yage (杨雅各), changed his name to Yang Yaguo (杨雅国), to celebrate the new state, *guo* (Shi 2000; Shen 1999: 43; Zhang 1992: 149).

also to the Han and Nosu community members' physical attack against Pollard and the Hua Miao. Pollard's diary reveals that violence started from rumour-mongering on the part of the Nosu and the Han, who were located higher in the hierarchical system of the Stone Gateway community than the Hua Miao (Grist 1971: 188). These two communities circulated rumours accusing the Hua Miao of poisoning the streams. According to Grist (1971: 188-89), '[i]t was even said that they (the Hua Miao) were intending to rebel, and that Pollard was not only abetting their schemes but that he was going to lead the Hua Miao and the Nosu against the Chinese'. Arguably, the rumours started because the Nosu and the Han felt threatened by the strengthening of the Hua Miao identity. After all, the Hua Miao people had been the subordinates in the hierarchy, but the missionaries had educated and therefore empowered them in relation to those formerly higher in the hierarchy. As a consequence, the Nosu attempted to stop the Hua Miao from converting to Christianity (Grist 1971: 197). Again, Tapp (1989: 98) identifies a similar phenomenon in the case of Hmong in Thailand:

> [T]he adoption of Christianity has never lessened the social distance between the minorities and the majorities with whom they, in many cases, maintained difficult and troubled relations before the advent for Christianity. Rather, the adoption of Christianity has usually alienated the minorities from the states of which they were, perforce, a part.

Pollard therefore 'threw himself wholeheartedly into the defence of the weak and downtrodden Hua Miao' (Grist 1971: 197). In short, Pollard downplayed the Han and Nosu communities largely because he was striving to protect the newly converted Christian Hua Miao community from those communities. The Han and Nosu were attempting to hamper his efforts to convert the Hua Miao. That is to say, the reason Pollard downplayed the Han and Nosu communities was the pre-existing hierarchical relationship between the Hua Miao on the one hand and the Han and Nosu on the other. For this reason, this case study supports Sweeten's (2001) claim (referred to at the beginning of this chapter) that it is necessary to investigate the pre-existing local origins of conflict in a village where a missionary has undertaken activity, rather than simply to assume the missionary's 'cultural imperialist' activity to be the cause of any social disorder.

To conclude, what is important for the purpose of my thesis is that Pollard's case reveals three kinds of interaction between the missionary and the ethnic communities in the Stone Gateway area. Pollard did not set out to prefer the Hua Miao community, but as a result of trouble arising from the attempt by the Han and Nosu communities to prevent the Hua Miao from converting to Christianity, Pollard was on the side of Hua

Miao. For the purpose of my thesis, I call the Hua Miao 'preferred community' in a sense that Pollard assisted this community, irrespective of whether such assistance was planed or not. The interaction between Pollard and the downplayed communities clearly reflected features of the conflict frame. In contrast, from the point of view of the Hua Miao conversion to Christianity, the interaction between Pollard and the preferred Hua Miao community reflected features of the adaptation frame. In relation to the strengthening of Hua Miao ethnic identity and their gaining the concept of 'nation-state', the interaction between Pollard and the Hua Miao community later evolved to the point where their interaction then reflected features of the middle ground frame.

Benefit from the Unequal Treaties?

Before reaching an overall conclusion, it is necessary to touch on the issue of the extent to which Pollard benefited from the unequal treaties concluded between China and Britain. First of all, the unequal treaties provided him with approval to travel anywhere inside China with a valid passport. Article 13 of the 1858 Tianjin Treaty guaranteed that French missionaries could 'travel anywhere inside China ... with valid passports'. Britain's MFN clause in the treaty also guaranteed Pollard's authority to travel 'anywhere inside China', and such authority to travel was a precondition fundamental to his undertaking activity in China's peripheral areas. This treaty rendered his evangelizing activity legally possible.

Second, unequal treaties more directly provided missionaries with the right to be protected by British Consuls and Chinese local governments. As a matter of fact, in attempting to protect the Christian Hua Miao from the violence of the Nosu, Pollard ultimately sought the help of the British consul in Kunming and of Chinese local governments, who were subscribers to the unequal treaties with the Chinese central government. Grist describes the situation as follows:

> [Pollard] availed himself of the Imperial edicts on behalf of toleration and liberty and obtained from the mandarins of Chaotong [Zhaotong] and Weining proclamations which commanded the authorities to protect Christians. The little, white-faced, frail missionary rose to the magnitude of his task, and with amazing celerity and splendid tact and courage, intervened wherever the Hua Miao were treated wrongfully because of their Christianity. In cases of especial malignity, or persistence in cruelty, he did not hesitate to report matters to the British Consul General at Yunnan Fu. It was soon recognized by the Chinese officials that Pollard could meet them on equal terms in insisting on Treaty rights and Imperial sanctions for the protection of the Christians. In dealing with [the] Tu-muh – many of them fierce, ignorant men, entrenched in their strong fortresses among the hills – he would enter into their houses and meet them face to face. In such interviews Pollard encountered lowering brows and menacing words with immovable calm,

> and when the first storm had spent itself he would bring into play his conciliatory spirit, humour, and quickness at repartee, and seek to win the persecutor to reason. If these failed he would employ a sterner tone and beat down opposition by a display of the official support given him by the mandarins (1971: 197-98).

One can analyse Pollard's reliance on the protection of the British Consul and on that of the Chinese officials in two ways. First, the unequal treaties proved highly advantageous in relation to his undertaking mission activity in the Stone Gateway area. The treaties provided him with the right to be protected which, in turn, *was* the ultimate reason why he *could* protect the Christian Hua Miao and himself. Thus, he assisted the Hua Miao to maintain their faith in Christianity in the face of their conflict with the Nosu. Pollard, as an individual missionary, resided in Stone Gateway and lived a life similar to that led by the locals. From the everyday life point of view, Pollard can be recognized as a member of the Stone Gateway community. However, once conflict occurred in the community, his status changed from being just 'one of the people within the community' to being an individual with the power of a Western imperial state behind him. From the perspective of Pollard and the Hua Miao, this was advantageous, given the 'malignity or persistence in cruelty' on the part of the Nosu (Grist 1971: 197). However, from the Nosu perspective, this change in status can be seen as the illegitimate intervention of a Western imperial government into the traditional social relations in Stone Gateway.

The second way to analyse Pollard's reliance on the protection of the British Consul and that of Chinese officials is to regard the relationship between the unequal treaties and the Hua Miao mass conversion to Christianity as an indirect one. The fact that Pollard was able to take advantage of the unequal treaties, and the fact that the Hua Miao converted *en masse* to Christianity, are not in a direct causal relationship, although one might argue that Pollard may not have been there in the first place without the support of the treaty. The main reasons for Pollard's ability to convert the Hua Miao *en masse* were, as explained earlier, his provision of education, the creation of a writing system for the Hua Miao language, and the fact that Christianity improved the social status of the Hua Miao, who were formerly confined to the lowest rank in the ethnic social hierarchy in this area.[21] If the unequal treaties related at all to the mass conversion of the Hua Miao, they did so *indirectly* rather than directly.

In short, an examination of the interaction between Pollard and the ethnic communities in the Stone Gateway area reveals that one cannot fail to take into account

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[21] Tapp (1989) raises the Hua Miao search for millennialism as one of the reasons for their mass conversion.

the broader influence of the unequal treaties. By the same token, the assumption that the unequal treaties facilitated the proselytizing of the villagers directly is arguably incorrect.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the fact that initially Christian missionaries working in China in the late nineteenth century perceived 'Western civilization' as being separate from Christianity. But they both began to merge as the twentieth century dawned. The attention on 'Western civilization' was gradually heightened, and by the 1920s the secularization of the Christian mission had begun. It also analyzed the interaction between Samuel Pollard and a number of ethnic communities living on China's periphery in the early twentieth century, and revealed that one particular frame of interaction—conflict, adaptation, or the middle ground—is not sufficient to capture all the features reflected in the diversity of such interaction.

This chapter introduced the ideas of 'preferred community' and 'downplayed community' in relation to the three frames of interaction. The village where Pollard undertook his mission contained a variety of multi-layered ethnic communities. These included the relatively broader Stone Gateway community, beneath and within which the Han, the Nosu and the Hua Miao communities existed in a hierarchical relationship. Indeed, the fact that a single village had plural communities is important for the purpose of comparing this historical case with today's international NGOs. The Hua Miao community was the preferred community, and as a result of this status a majority of the Hua Miao eventually became Christians. The Han and Nosu communities were downplayed communities, among whom Christianity did not spread.

Only the middle ground frame can fully account for the deep engagement of a missionary and a community and the self-realization of the community. The interaction between Pollard and the Hua Miao community went beyond the latter's adapting to Christianity. In the process of interaction, their relationship developed, and something new occurred, which neither Pollard nor the Hua Miao had intended. Pollard's deep engagement with the Hua Miao community has been demonstrated by the change in his activity, away from the mere promotion of Christianity towards the merging of Christianity and Western civilization, and beyond this to assisting the Hua Miao to gain national recognition. The strengthening of Hua Miao community identity was also highlighted.

Whether this change in Pollard's activity signifies substantive or instrumental identity change on the part of Pollard is an important question. To discuss the difference between substantive and instrumental identity changes requires investigating how Pollard perceived the change in his own activity. It is extremely difficult to do this because of limitations in the existing literature. Nevertheless, the fact that Pollard's values that he attempted to promote shifted over time *as a result of his interaction with ethnic communities* is a significant finding in this chapter.

This chapter has also argued that it is important to recognize the *limited* impact of the unequal treaty system on *individual* British missionaries. Unequal treaties between China and Britain affected the British missionaries favourably, and provided them with privileged status. However, the privileged status meant, at least to the individual missionaries, merely that they could claim the right to protection by local governments in the event that they faced serious threats to their lives. The treaty system, while conferring certain limited diplomatic privileges on the missionaries, did not explicitly confer a vicarious context for the proselytising of Chinese minorities. This chapter, thus, contends that the cultural imperialism argument is 'distortingly simplistic'.

Now that an historical investigation of Christian missionaries has been completed, the following part of this thesis, which focuses on the present day, examines international NGOs. To what extent do their perceptions of the values that they attempt to spread differ from that of their historical counterparts, and if so, to what extent? How can we assess the interaction between international NGOs and ethnic communities by using the same three frames of interaction? Each of the chapters that follow will present a case study on the work of an international NGO today; Jian Hua Foundation (Chapter Four), The Salvation Army (Chapter Five) and Oxfam (Chapter Six).

PART TWO

CONTEMPORARY 'CIVILIZING MISSIONS'?

Part two of this thesis consists of three chapters, each of which examines a different case study NGO: the Jian Hua Foundation (hereafter JHF), The Salvation Army, and Oxfam Hong Kong. This section elaborates on the three broad themes that each chapter addresses, and provides an overview of the community development projects undertaken by each of the three case study NGOs.

Three Broad Themes

The three broad themes that each chapter addresses are *the origins and nature of values and beliefs*, *the reformulation of identity in China*, and *interaction with ethnic communities*. In relation to the first theme, each chapter undertakes an historically informed analysis of the values and beliefs of the three international NGOs. Although the case study NGOs (re)entered China after the inauguration of Deng Xiaoping's Open Door Policy in 1978 (JHF in 1981, The Salvation in 1991, and Oxfam in 1987), the history of the NGOs within and outside mainland China will provide us with a rich contextual understanding of the activity of the NGOs today. Each chapter describes how and against what background each organization was established, and identifies the values and beliefs of each at the time of its establishment. The time and place of establishment differ significantly from organization to organization: The Salvation Army was established in London in 1865; Oxfam in Oxford in 1943; and JHF in Hong Kong in 1981. Therefore, an examination of the values and beliefs of each organization in its historical context will add depth to an understanding of the nature of values and beliefs espoused by these NGOs today. In keeping with this historical emphasis, I will also explore the values and beliefs of each NGO at the time of its entry or re-entry into mainland China.

This examination is followed by an analysis of the values and beliefs each organization attempts to spread today. Each chapter investigates the perceptions the *overseas members* have of the values and beliefs of their respective NGOs, *without particular reference to China.* International NGOs that operate within mainland China have members in other countries, and in Hong Kong. By investigating the origins and nature of values and beliefs espoused by the international NGOs, my intention is to

explore the relevance of the idea of the 'civilizing mission' to the values and beliefs of the international NGOs today.

An examination of the values and beliefs espoused by these overseas members is also important preparation for an analysis of the second theme of Part Two, which is the reformulation of identity in China. In relation to the second theme (*the reformulation of identity in China)*, each chapter investigates whether, and if so to what extent, each organization reformulated its identity in the context of project work carried out in China. One of the risks faced by international religious NGOs when undertaking project activity in mainland China relates to the identity as evangelical Christian organization. To avoid unnecessary conflict with the Chinese government, the international Christian NGOs dare not overtly evangelize when they work in China. They minimize the risk of causing any such conflict by downplaying of their evangelical identity to enable them to better blend into the atheist communist system. The question is, to what extent did such adjusting actually lead to a substantial reformulation of identity? Do they reformulate their identity substantially, by dispensing with evangelism, or superficially, by adjusting the presentation of their activities? What, if any, are the *religious* aspects of their community development projects?

Similar questions may be asked in relation to the secular NGOs. The values and beliefs that Oxfam advocates, which constitute its identity, include the concept of the 'rights' and 'participation' of people. Such values and beliefs are not necessarily compatible with the values and beliefs espoused by Chinese communism.

In order to investigate this second theme, each chapter specifically examines the personnel and financial arrangements of an NGO, and critically analyzes the design of its community development project. Examining these dimensions is helpful in observing a 'substantial' change in identity, as opposed to a 'superficial' adjustment in the way the NGOs present its identity.

While the second theme addresses how projects are *designed from the perspective of international NGOs*, the third theme (*interaction with ethnic communities*) looks at how the projects are *implemented and perceived from the perspective of local ethnic community members*. Each chapter analyzes the interaction between one NGO and the ethnic communities it engages with, and aims to understand local perspectives in relation to the case study community development projects. Each chapter focuses particularly on the question of how a project has been actually implemented on the

ground, and on the question of how China's ethnic communities have perceived and responded to the externally generated values, beliefs and activities.

Specifically, the third theme explores the following three points in each project. The first is how the international NGOs interpret the idea of 'community' in their 'community development' projects, and whether they account for the 'multiple communities' that actually exist in villages. As will be discussed later, in designing a 'community development' project, the homogeneity of 'community' is often assumed by development practitioners. The second point is how members of ethnic communities respond to the international NGOs. The interaction between NGOs and ethnic community members is interpreted by means of the three frames of interaction described in Chapter One. The following section briefly discusses the criteria used to select the case study community development projects undertaken by the international NGOs and comments on the locations of the projects.

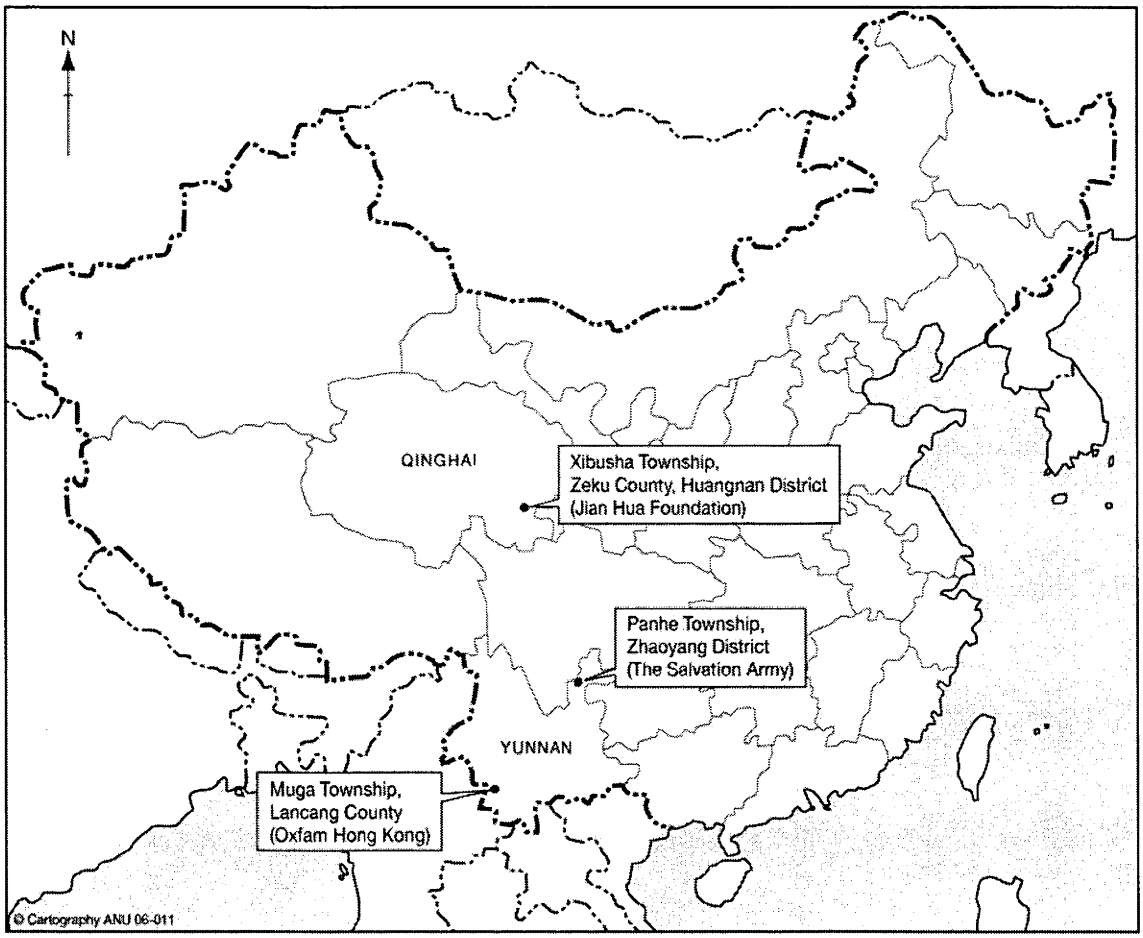
Three Case Study Community Development Projects

The three case study community development projects I selected were conducted in villages with ethnic minority populations. This criterion was essential, not only because this thesis focuses on ethnic communities, but also because these communities often have their own pre-existing religions. Exploring the interaction between international Christian and secular NGOs, and ethnic communities that have their own religions, will enable this thesis to address the following questions: Does intervention by international religious agencies affect the religious beliefs of ethnic communities? How does the religious aspect (both that of the international NGOs and that of the community) affect the implementation of the project? The case study project sites are shown in Map 4.1.

As can be seen from the map, there are two project sites in Yunnan. The reason for this relates to my focus on ethnic communities. Officially, Yunnan Province is home to twenty-six minority groups. Approximately thirty-six percent of the population of the Province consists of ethnic minorities.[1] Many minorities reside in the mountainous and extremely poorer areas of Yunnan. More international NGOs are attracted to Yunnan to

[1] The percentage is calculated based on the population figure in 2001. See Yunnan Statistical Yearbook (2002: 668-71).

Map 4.1: Locations of the Case Study Community Development Projects



conduct their projects than to any other province,[2] partly because of the large number of people living in poverty and the fact that they reside in very inhospitable and mountainous areas. Another factor is Yunnan's geographical proximity to Southeast Asia, and the fact that its ethnic minorities are similar to those residing in neighbouring countries, making it easier for international NGOs to expand their projects from Southeast Asia into Yunnan.[3] These two points naturally led to the selection of the two case studies in Yunnan Province. Selecting two case studies in Yunnan Province does not compromise my comparative approach because of the high degree of diversity among the many community development projects there and the many ethnic communities in the province.

A comparative analysis of the three NGOs across the three broad themes will be presented in the Conclusion. At this point I will also discuss the implications of the comparative analysis for our broader understanding of the nature of the Christian

[2] It is almost impossible to obtain accurate statistics on which province or autonomous region has accommodated how many projects conducted by international NGOs. However, it is suggestive that the *Directory of International NGOs* (China Development Brief 2006), provided by China Development Brief, reveals that Yunnan has the most projects (forty-six projects).

'civilizing mission' in China. What follows is an examination of the first international Christian NGO: the Jian Hua Foundation.

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3 Interview with a program officer for the Ford Foundation in Beijing, 03 September 2003.

CHAPTER FOUR

A CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIAN EVANGELISM AND TIBETAN BUDDHISM: THE JIAN HUA FOUNDATION

Origins, Values and Beliefs

'Jian Hua' (建华) means 'build China' in Mandarin. However, this secular-sounding foundation has quite a strong Christian evangelical connection. JHF's head office has been located in Hong Kong since its establishment in September 1981. One might argue that JHF is no longer an international NGO in the strictest sense, because Hong Kong is now a part of China. Nevertheless, JHF can still be classified as an international NGO for two good reasons. First, Hong Kong was a British territory until 1997. Since China regained sovereignty over it in 1997, many have speculated that the society and politics of Hong Kong would become heavily influenced by the mainland's political system. The extent to which Hong Kong is likely to maintain a degree of independence from China's central government has been at the core of many political debates. Thus far, however, Hong Kong's social and civil legal systems still operate with relative independence. Thus, neither JHF's status in Hong Kong, nor its religious affiliation, has changed significantly since its establishment. The second reason is that mainland China recognizes JHF as a foreign institution. As Brady (2000: 944) explains, 'from an administrative point of view "foreigners" includes Overseas Chinese, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan "compatriots" regardless of whether they are foreign nationals'. In fact, JHF registered itself with State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA) (*Guojia Waiguo Zhuanjia Ju* 国家外国专家局), a Chinese government agency overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[1]

[1] JHF registered with the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA). This was an unusual step. Of the more than 200 development international NGOs engaged in activities in China, only thirty-nine are fully approved and registered with SAFEA (as of 2002) (Zhonghua Renmin Gonghe Guo Guojia Waiguo Zhuanjia Ju 2003). JHF's registration was its own initiative; not as a result of government coercion. One of the reasons JHF registered with SAFEA is that this was the only available channel through which to gain some degree of legal recognition in mainland China at the time. As one of the earliest organizations to enter China, JHF sought the most propitious way to maintain a good relationship with the Chinese government. Its activity was in line with SAFEA's objectives of introducing foreign experts to China, because initially JHF was a placement agency for Christian professionals, such as English teachers and medical doctors. Interview with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation in Hong Kong, 13 December 2005.

Approaching Influential Chinese

JHF was founded by a small group of Chinese businessmen in Hong Kong with an interest in supporting China's development (JHF 2001: 1). The founding members were known to each other through various Christian networks outside mainland China.[2] Some of them knew each other through the Fellowship of Evangelical Students (*Xuesheng Fuyin Yundong* 學生福音運動) and some through Christian publishing companies. They led several Hong Kong Protestant evangelical organizations.[3]

Even though JHF does not proclaim its evangelical nature, its founders and current associates have a strong belief in the role of evangelism in the conduct of its affairs. Agencies that fund JHF also share this belief. However, JHF is very cautious about the implications of its Christian identity in relation to the work it carries out in mainland China. JHF describes itself on its own webpage as follows:

> JHF [*sic*] is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO) with a Christian ethos and background. However JHF does not get involved in political issues nor engage in religious activities unacceptable to China (JHF 2005).

JHF's constitution does not refer to its religious nature, and therefore 'it is a secular organization', said one of the founders.[4] Nevertheless, not only were its founders Christians who particularly emphasized the role of evangelism in Christianity, but since its establishment all board members and individual 'associates' of JHF (with the exception of a few local employees) have also been Christian. One of JHF's founders pointed out during an interview that JHF importantly differentiates the organization from its individuals. He stated that while JHF 'does not stop people from believing in Christianity, one's Christian belief has to be purely private'.[5] This is consistent with the Chinese constitution, which assures individual freedom of belief.

What is striking about JHF's history is the fact that JHF was one of the earliest, if not the earliest, international NGO to enter mainland China: it entered in 1981, just two years after Deng Xiaoping's Open Door Policy was promulgated in 1979. JHF's

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2 Written correspondence with International Director of the Jian Hua Foundation, 1 December 2005.

3 For example, three of four founders have worked for the Fellowship of Evangelical Students since 1963, in order to plan and implement a new gospel team for junior high school students in Hong Kong. Interview with one of the founders of the Jian Hua Foundation, 13 December 2005. One of the founders is the former CEO of the CEDAR Fund, a Christian NGO, and was also a standing committee member of the Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism (世界華人福音事工聯絡中心) (Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism 2001). Another founder was a Chairman of the China Bible Seminary (中華神學院), and taught science and theology at several other seminaries. Interview with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation, in Hong Kong, 13 December 2005.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

founders attempted to find a way to explore what they could do for mainland China as Christians living outside. Communist China has strictly controlled religious activity by foreign organizations, so JHF found it necessary to look for an alternative reason to enter China. In 1979, Deng Xiaoping set out his 'Four Modernizations', and JHF's founders decided to make their own contribution to them.[6]

According to one of the founders, JHF did not have enough capital for developing the 'hardware' of China's modernization. So instead, it aimed to contribute to the 'software' aspect of development: things such as education, medical know-how, and agriculture. Assisting in the modernization of China dove-tailed neatly into another important JHF purpose: to make a 'Christian impression' on Chinese government officials.[7] In the minds of JHF's founders, making Christianity a legitimate part of Chinese society and demonstrating to the Chinese that Christians could make a valuable contribution to the Four Modernizations was an urgent and important task.

To achieve this purpose, JHF needed to establish a close relationship with the Chinese government. As one of the first international NGOs to enter China after 1979, whatever impression JHF made on China would have a great effect on overall impressions of Christian organizations.[8] The connection with Chinese government authorities was initiated on the basis of a personal relationship between one of the founders and a few top Chinese governmental officials.[9] A booklet celebrating JHF's twentieth anniversary (JHF 2001: 1) states that 'already by [1981] JHF was making contacts in various provinces and being invited to send teams of doctors and teachers [to those provinces]. JHF was already up and running, seeking ways to help "build China"'.

JHF was able to enter China on the strength of a formal connection to Huang Zhen (黄镇), then Chinese Minister for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (*Duiwai Wenwei* 对外文委). JHF and Huang Zhen 'signed two agreements regarding scholarly exchanges and the building of the ICEC (International Cultural Exchange Centre) headquarters' (JHF 2001: 2):

> The idea for the ICEC started when Deng Xiaoping wanted to develop people's diplomacy. [Deng suggested that the] relationship should start with friendship between people; not so much [between] officials at the conference table. So Deng

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6 Interview with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation in Hong Kong, 13 December 2005.

7 Interview with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation, communication by telephone, 7 December 2005.

8 Written correspondence with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation, 5 May 2006.

9 Interview with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation in Hong Kong, 17 December 2005.

> Xiaoping wanted the ICEC as a venue [for people's diplomacy]. China came out of the Cultural Revolution impoverished. Who would volunteer to contribute?[10]

This was the crucial moment at which JHF entered the picture. The purpose of the ICEC was to encourage cultural exchange between China and other countries. It was planned that the facilities in the ICEC building would 'include a modern theatre that [could] be used for international conferences as well as for the performance of large-scale operas, ballets and concerts' (JHF 1985: 27). The ICEC enjoyed the support of top party officials. Peng Chong (彭冲), a vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of National People's Congress, was appointed the chairman of the ICEC Council, and one of its vice-chairmen was Hu Jintao, then First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League of China and now President of China (JHF 1985: 11, 14).

JHF was a genuine pioneer Christian international NGO in mainland China. It was a challenge for both the Chinese government and JHF to find a way for foreign Christian organizations to work in China when JHF entered China in the 1980s. In mid-1982, JHF experienced a setback. In spite of its strong connection to the Chinese government, its activity was not without its detractors; a religious leader under the Communist government did not fully appreciate JHF's position, and openly criticized it in mid-1982, arguing that it did not enter China under the auspices of the Three Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM), the Protestant organization authorized by the government. He did not refer to JHF by name, but it was clear from his statements that JHF was the target of his criticism because it was one of the very few organizations involved in China at that time. Such criticism actually affected JHF's projects, particularly in relation to raising funds for the ICEC (JHF 2001: 2). However, the organization eventually overcame the setback through the support of authorities in the upper echelons of the Communist government.

A second shock came in 1989 after the violence at Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Immediately after this incident, all the banks, fearing a run on their funds, decided to withdraw or limit credit facilities. The ICEC was being built by funds in part contributed by JHF and in part by a loan from a bank. By recalling the loan to the ICEC, the bank put the ICEC on the verge of insolvency. ICEC had to sell the Cultural Centre project to the Beijing Foreign Trade and Economic Commission (*Duiwai Maoyi Jingji Weiyuanhui* 对外贸易经济委员会). One of JHF's founders commented:

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[10] Written correspondence with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation, 5 May 2006.

> JHF lost everything, but the fact that even Deng Xiaoping recognized that JHF was doing good work was of fundamental importance. Originally, JHF was not too keen on building dance theatres and conference rooms. The building of the ICEC was of 'strategic importance'. It helped to provide a window into the contribution that Christian organizations could make to China's modernization, a positive impression of Christian organizations, and gain political recognition.[11]

In short, JHF's strong relationship with the Chinese authorities enabled it to make inroads into a long-closed China, and underpinned the security of the organization. The extent to which this relationship was based on trust rather than control is an important but difficult question to address. Anne Marie Brady's paper on foreigners in China provides some useful insights. After China's opening up, the ways the Chinese government dealt with foreigners were:

> ...designed both to control and to utilize foreigners for China's purposes, taking [their] cue from earlier aphorisms such as Mao's call to "make the foreign serve China" and the late Qing catchphrase "Chinese knowledge as the essence, Western learning for practical use" (2000: 963).

At least at the beginning, the relationship between the Chinese government and JHF appeared to be more one of surveillance. However, the fact that JHF started working in China soon after the Open Door Policy and still managed to retain its evangelical nature, had significant implications for hundreds of international Christian NGOs that have worked in China to date.

Values and Beliefs outside Mainland China Today

The values and beliefs of JHF's founders have been maintained since its establishment. It seeks to make a Christian contribution to 'build China' in material as well as spiritual dimensions. Its Mission Statement, although it does not emphasize Christian evangelical values, implicitly suggests the two dimensions of material and spiritual help:

> JHF's purpose is to build China through cooperation in education, development, medical and social services, serving her peoples with compassion, integrity & expertise (JHF 2005a).

Although JHF is not permitted to directly evangelize Chinese people, it still seeks to make a 'spiritual' contribution through 'compassion'. Compassion is a core value of the organization. Martin Klopper (2005b), the Chief Executive Officer of JHF, provides the following explanation:

> Compassion is an undervalued "commodity" in the world today.... In our materialistic world, how is greatness to be measured? If not by economic means and technological advance, important as these are, then by what measure? The

[11] Interview with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation in Hong Kong, 17 December 2005.

> human spirit constantly reaches out to that which is beyond self-interest, but so often miserably fails! Reflected in many of the great belief systems, we find the principle of "doing to others what we would have them do to us". If this was the basis of all human interaction and the foundation of social contract, the world would be a better place.... One of the recurrent themes in famous paintings is the passion of Christ.... It appears that the defining moments of history either derive from the barrel of a gun or from great acts of compassion. By far the more significant of these are those acts of compassion which defy our own interests.... [E]ven small acts of kindness are history making. It is our desire in JHF through acts of compassion to be making a difference in China (Klopper 2005b).

It is evident from this reference to the paintings of the passion of Christ that his understanding of compassion is based on Christian beliefs. JHF's values, or more correctly the values of those individuals who work for JHF, are evangelical rather than liberal and modernist. It is not just a question of showing compassion, but if possible, in a 'law-abiding' way in the Chinese context, to let people know about Jesus Christ.

The evangelical underpinning of JHF can be seen more clearly in relation to its partnerships with Christian evangelical organizations worldwide, including the Christian Reformed Church in North America, and Global Connections in the UK (Christian Reformed Church in North America 2006: 211; Global Connections 2006). The Chinese Church in London, which is a member of the Evangelical Alliance, also refers to JHF as a 'partner mission organization' (Chinese Church in London 2005). Importantly, JHF's partnerships outside of China are all with evangelical, rather than liberal Christian organizations. This does not mean, however, that JHF is a tool for overseas evangelical organizations wishing to make inroads into China. Instead, one of JHF's directors revealed that JHF sometimes has to 'translate' the evangelical values of overseas organizations to suit the Chinese context.[12]

It is important to note that the evangelical values espoused by JHF members are based on the assumption of the superiority of Christianity over other religions. This is demonstrated, again, in Klopper's (2005b) writing in a JHF newsletter:

> So much of what people do is based on "contract giving". We give or we serve in order to get something back. The "payback" or "reward" may not be financial but we may get prestige, or a good feeling, or a sense of achievement. Unconsciously, we may even feel we are gaining merit! This is not so different from what motivates Tibetan monks, for example. Indeed, some Tibetan monks were moved by a JHF team bringing truckloads of food supplies to an area following a snow disaster and asked one of our associates, "Why did you come to help us? Is it to earn merit?" In terms of contract giving, this made more sense than the associate's answer, "No, it is simply the Christian response to human need. JHF wants to help where and when we are able".

[12] Interview with the Director of Finance and Operations, Jian Hua Foundation, in Hong Kong, 12 December 2005.

In other words, Tibetan monks are described as serving people based on 'contract giving', and the Christian approach to 'compassion' is deemed superior to Tibetan Buddhism. Indeed, one of the founders mentioned, 'we hope that we will eventually make a Christian impression on Chinese Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists'.[13] The sense of superiority of Christian evangelical values clearly symbolizes a part of the 'civilising mission', explained in chapter one. The underlying assumption is that the civilizer's belief is superior to that of the civilizees. Therefore, this worldview is constructed hierarchically, claiming that Christianity occupies the top of hierarchy with its virtue and morality, and that others should, by being civilized, be brought up to the same or similar level as those at the top, following the Christian way of civilizational values.

Reformulation of Identity in Mainland China?

Funding and Personnel Relations

How and to what extent the JHF has reformulated its evangelical nature in conducting its activity in mainland China is an interesting question, especially given the fact that its relationship with the Chinese government has been very close. An examination of its personnel and funding relations, as well as its design of community development projects, demonstrates how JHF maintains its values in China, rather than substantially reformulating them. This section reveals that the international Christian network is fundamental to JHF. Those who work for JHF do so because of their firm belief in Christianity. Those who fund JHF do so for the very same reason. Put simply, belief in Christianity is the very basis of the activities carried out by the organization.

JHF's strong Christian identity and its total trust in Jesus have characterized its financial situation. As a relatively small organization, JHF has not put much effort into fundraising. According to the Director of Finance and Operations, one reason for this is that JHF has acted as a kind of placement agency for English teachers and medical doctors, and its history of involvement in development projects, which are more expensive to run, is quite a recent one. 'We have not done active fundraising activity', he said; 'We leave that to God. When we have ideas about projects and personnel, but no money, somehow the money eventually comes. When the money is available, but there are no personnel to conduct the projects, somehow the personnel eventually come. A trusting relationship between the church and the people brings projects and money

[13] Interview with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation, communication by telephone, 5 May 2006.

together'.[14] In other words, JHF is doing things 'naturally', rather than exerting a great deal of effort in that direction. However, the Chairman of the Board of Directors has acknowledged the need to plan more strategically:

> The Board of Directors does not want to go bigger. Whether making organizations bigger is a Christian thing to do or not is an interesting question. However, the new Chief Executive Officer of JHF tries to have more strategic plans for JHF, rather than natural growth.[15]

Apart from disaster relief funding provided by the Hong Kong government, the majority of JHF funding comes from Christian organizations, for example the Cedar Fund.[16] In fact, Oliver Mark, one of the founders and members of the board of JHF, is also the CEO of the Cedar Fund, a Christian NGO based in Hong Kong and working on the mainland.[17] At the project level, the Cedar Fund provides funding for its partner organizations, including JHF, Project Grace, and the Evergreen Family Friendship Services. Church and Christian organizations do not usually have particular conditions attached to their funding.[18] However, the funding that is provided is based on trust in the belief that JHF's projects emphasize Christian evangelical values.

With regard to its personnel relations, too, Christianity is fundamentally important. All JHF's overseas 'associates' are Christian. For example, its Japanese brochure states that 'the JHF Foundation dispatches volunteers from all over the world to China. We welcome Japanese Christian professionals and Christian students' (JHF NDa). One of my interviewees stated that development work is very difficult, and would be made much more so if staff members were of different faiths'.[19]

A project coordinator working in Qinghai illustrates the way his devotion to Christianity encouraged him to work as a member of the JHF staff. He is a New Zealand citizen, and before he started working for JHF, he was working as an engineer in New Zealand. He did not have any previous experience in, or special connection to, China;

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14 Interview with the Director of Finance and Operations, Jian Hua Foundation, in Hong Kong, 12 December 2005.

15 Interview with Chairman of JHF International Board, in Hong Kong, 13 December 2005.

16 A small number of projects conducted by JHF receive Western government funding, for example from the New Zealand government. It seems that there is no particular policy in JHF as to which kind of projects may receive government funding. In any case, the portion of Western government funding of JHF's entire project funding is only a small part of overall JHF funding. Interview with the Director of Finance and Operations, Jian Hua Foundation, in Hong Kong, 12 December 2005.

17 The Cedar's mission statement reveals that the 'CEDAR Fund ministers holistically to the poor and disadvantaged in partnership with churches and Christian groups, through education, development, advocacy and relief programmes, to share the good news of God's kingdom with them and to demonstrate God's love, compassion and justice to the world'.(Cedar Fund ND).

18 This is unless Christian organizations specialize in a particular area, such as blindness.

19 Interview with Japanese Programs' Coordinator and Coordinator for Short-term Programs, Jian Hua Foundation, in Hong Kong, 2 December 2004.

nor had he studied community development, or learnt Mandarin. In his own words, he 'heard a call from Jesus'; 'Jesus guided him to Qinghai', of which he had never heard until then. He first stayed in Xining, the provincial capital, where he studied Chinese and Tibetan for about a year. Then he went to Tongren County, a rural town with a population of 75,645 as of 2003 (Qinghai Sheng Tongji Jü 2004: 82). There he set up a JHF representative office and started the 'Huangnan Community Development Training Programme'. This project coordinator's response to a spiritual calling made it possible for JHF to establish its office and its project in Tongren.[20]

Surprisingly, 'most JHF staff members and representatives serve as non-salaried volunteers, and receive financial support from friends and churches' (JHF 2005), even though it is usual for both secular and religious NGOs to employ their staff members on some sort of salary. In other words, most JHF staff members are not 'employees' who earn a salary from JHF; instead, they pay JHF to work for JHF, paying an annual administration fee of US$500 (for a single person)/US$700 (for a couple) (JHF 2005). This style reminds one of the works of the China Inland Mission (CIM) in the early twentieth century, which clearly stated 'the members of the mission had no guaranteed salary but were to trust God to supply their needs' (Latourette 1929: 385). Although it does not state so, JHF really places its faith on a reliance on Christian and church support to supply its needs. Christian churches outside China fund JHF and the church missions that work with JHF. It seems that the approach to 'trust God to supply their needs' continues to work for JHF, just as it worked for the CIM.

There are more than two hundred long-term volunteers from about twenty countries working for JHF in China, and many of them come as married couples or families. This could be interpreted as a significant self-sacrifice or devotion based on a belief in Christianity. Usually a development worker goes to a project site as an individual, leaving his or her family in the city, and receiving a salary or fee from the particular NGO he or she has chosen to work for. JHF's style accentuates family commitment, which cannot exist without the belief of all family members in Christianity. In the case of the project coordinator in Tongren, he too was accompanied by his wife and four children. Everyone in the family seemed very happy.

In addition, it is worth noting how JHF cooperates with other Christian organizations by facilitating the movement of people into China to engage in project work. JHF plays a kind of introduction-agency role in relation to 'Christian

[20] Interview with Project Coordinator, Tongren Office, the Jian Hua Foundation, 3 November 2004.

professionals'. On the one hand, overseas Christian churches and other Christian organizations, such as Christian Reformed Church in North America, and the Chinese Church in London, and Global Connections, send people to JHF to work in mainland China (Christian Reformed Church in North America 2006: 211; Chinese Church in London 2005; Global Connections 2006). On the other hand, there are organizations operating only in China, such as Project Grace, Evergreen Family Friendship Services, and the Friends of China, each of which is run by non-mainland Chinese staff members, many of whom have a Western Christian background. These organizations work in China on long-term projects, and therefore, have learnt how to comply with the expectations of the Communist government. However, they are more inclined to be inward looking, attending to their business rather than generating interest among other overseas recruits. In other words, their primary motivation is not the recruiting of personnel. JHF, which is a Hong Kong-based organization with strong ties to, and relationships with, overseas Christian organizations, acts as a go-between to introduce 'Christian professionals' to the organizations operating only in China. Some of the staff members introduced by JHF take leadership roles in some of these organizations.[21] These organizations, as well as overseas church organizations, both of which cooperate with JHF, all espouse very similar Christian evangelical values, and their cooperation would be impossible without sharing the same values and beliefs.

It is important to note, also, that JHF plays a role in translating those values. When overseas Christian workers go to China to work, they need not only to understand the political conditions and restrictions on Christian activity in China, but also to overcome a 'particular mentality and cultural gap' in China.[22] By introducing overseas Christian professionals to home-grown organizations, JHF enables Christian professionals to work in accordance with their Christian values, and, at the same time, to do so under Communist circumstances.

As a result of strong international Christian cooperation in assisting JHF's need for human resources, staff members in the representative offices in mainland China, including the family of the project coordinator mentioned above, are generally foreign nationals of Western (Anglo-Saxon) appearance. Of the three case-study organizations, JHF is the only one in which 'Western'-looking project officers, or 'foreigners', directly

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[21] Interview with the Director of Finance and Operations, Jian Hua Foundation, in Hong Kong, 12 December 2005.

[22] *Ibid.*

intervene in local communities. One of JHF's directors explained this situation as follows:

> When JHF was established, the Board members were Hong Kong Chinese, but all other staff members were volunteer foreigners. The good thing about the foreign connection is the funding. There are many supporters and volunteers throughout the world. JHF's two representative offices employ local people, but there is the issue of how to find the money to pay for them. It is easier to get financial support for our own (Western) people. Donors expect money to be well spent, so the use of Western volunteers frees more donor money to go directly to the project itself.[23]

JHF's local staff members are remunerated for their work, so the comment about effective use of funding by using volunteer foreigners makes sense. However, when I asked if JHF expected to establish local NGOs or to set up some projects to be run by local staff the interviewee stated:

> In the future, there is no reason why we should stop local staff members from becoming leaders, as long as they are Christians.

This comment is highly revealing. Clearly, JHF is specific about the Christian identity of its project leaders.

Design of the Community Development Project

To what extent the Christian aspect is reflected in actual projects is an important question. From 2002 to 2004 JHF conducted a pilot community-based project in Xibusha Township, Zeku County in Huangnan District in Qinghai Province (青海省黄南州泽库县西卜沙乡). This is a remote nomadic Tibetan area, lying approximately 130 km south of the town centre of Tongren County, where a JHF regional office exists and where the JHF associate and his family reside (see Photo 4.1). Zeku County lies on the Qinghai-Tibet plateau. Xibusha Township has 2,200 people, mostly Tibetans (JHF 2003).[24] The average altitude of the county is some 3,500 metres, and the economic conditions of the village are extremely poor. Villagers depend on their livestock for their livelihood, trade yak skins and yak butter to earn cash. Some villagers even sell yak dung for fuel.

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[23] Interview with International Director of the Jian Hua Foundation, 2 December 2004.

[24] According to the government statistics, in Zeku County, 95.93 percent of the population are the Tibetans, and 3.18 percent are the Han (Huangnan Zangzu Zizhi Zhou Zhi Bianzuan Weiyuanhui 1999: 170).

Photo 4.1: Xibusha Township (Hongqi Administrative Natural Village) (Taken by author)

JHF's pilot community development project in Xibusha was one of the two major components of the organization's 'Huangnan Community Development Training Programme'. The other major component involved the provision of training to doctors and nurses from throughout the Prefecture based at the Huangnan Health School and the supply of medical equipment and library books to the Prefectural hospital. My focus in this case-study is only on the project carried out in the remote nomadic Tibetan area, which aimed to provide primary healthcare and literacy training. This was a JHF community development project in a rural ethnic community, so it can be easily compared with the other project supported by The Salvation Army and Oxfam Hong Kong. The whole program cost US$156,000 (1,248,000RMB) (JHF 2004b), of which the Xibusha community development pilot project's portion was US$8,300 (approximately 69,000RMB).[25] While financially, the medical training project at the township hospitals cost eighteen times more than the Xibusha community development project, JHF considered the Xibusha project component to be of importance because it would have a bearing on future JHF projects in those communities.

[25] The final audit totals HK$66,380. Currency rate is approximately HK$8 for US$1.

This community development project started as a means of undertaking in-depth assessments of 'health and community development needs' in the nomadic communities (JHF 2002a). At the same time, JHF emphasized 'relationship building at the community level'. It believed in building 'relationships of trust in these three or four communities using participatory methods in order to carry out subsequent and later projects which [would] build on the successes of this proposed project' (JHF 2002a). In other words, this project amounted to a 'pre-project project'.[26]

JHF's emphasis on the importance of relationship-building originated from the experience of the project coordinator in Tongren. When JHF attempted to conduct a needs analysis in selected communities, the project coordinator noted the frustration of the local villagers. The fact that foreigners had visited their communities and conducted a needs analysis raised the expectations of these remote villagers, as they rarely got to see outsiders. At that time, the villagers had no idea how long it was going to take before they would be able to see actual progress in the projects. They had to wait until JHF had analysed their needs, written a project proposal, translated it from English to Chinese, discussed the project with specialists and with Chinese local government officials, raised the requisite funding, and organized specialists to come into the communities to begin the actual project work. This kind of frustration among aid recipients is common. The JHF project coordinator realized that a needs analysis would take time, and that the expectations of the communities would not be met in the short term. Therefore, he thought it necessary to have something to offer while completing the needs analysis. In accordance with this thinking, JHF built four primary schools in these communities in 1998 alone. The interviewee stated that it is more meaningful to complete a needs analysis after some effort has been expended in relationship building with the local communities, and that such analysis would be better conducted later rather than at the initial stage.[27]

This approach to a needs analysis actually makes a lot of sense in the context of understanding development projects as being predicated on human relationships, and of genuinely believing in the importance of participation and the 'partnership' between outsiders and local people, as emphasized in the literature on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The fact that the villagers have difficulty getting accustomed to the idea that they should work *with* the outsiders reinforces the importance of relationship building. Building primary schools at the early stage as a gift can act as a meaningful

[26] Interview with Project Coordinator, Tongren Office, the Jian Hua Foundation, 3 November 2004.

icebreaker in this sense. The participation literature does not offer an explanation of the different strategies that may be used by outsiders during the various stages of projects, but JHF's experience highlights the importance of tailoring the approach to each development project.[28]

Because the primary focus of this project was to build a trusting relationship with the community and to analyze its needs, the actual design of the project was left vague. However, what became vital in determining project content, and the relationship between JHF and community members, was JHF's expectation of 'likely' future projects. The project proposal states, 'the four main areas of needs assessment will be the following; health, education, business and social issues'. It continues as follows:

> - From the health needs already evident, primary healthcare training is a likely training program, coupled with an improvement in the standards of healthcare provided by the current healthcare workers.
> - From the education needs already apparent, it is likely that an adult literacy programme could be initiated (JHF 2002a).

How the local villagers responded to these two 'likely' future programs will be examined in the next section on local interaction.

The way this project fits into JHF's evangelical nature is closely related to JHF's emphasis on an 'holistic approach' to development.[29] The guiding principle of 'holistic training content' is clearly written in the programme proposal (JHF 2002a: 3). According to Savage (2004), in an holistic approach, the religious mediator plays an important role in improving health: 'The belief system and ritual performances that the religious mediator represents and affirms are recognized as important to the well-being and health of the individual' (Savage 2004). Savage goes on to argue that the Bible also shows an holistic approach to health, that is, a connection between health and spiritual practices. He writes:

> In Acts and Mark we read of Jesus [*sic*] going about doing good and curing all who had fallen into [*sic*] the power of evil. Further, the apostle James notes the influence on the ill person of the power of grace through the healing gifts of the community. Christians believe that spiritual practices (religious rituals) and prayer strengthen the ill person, arouse confidence in divine mercy, and belief about spirituality and health (Savage 2004).

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27 *Ibid.*

28 I am grateful to the Programme Coordinator for his suggestion on this point.

29 Some of my interviewees (who work for a Christian organization) think that a 'holistic' approach relates to religious values, whereas 'wholistic' approach refers to secular.

One of JHF's directors also suggested that health was actually related to one's value system. In answering my question on the Christian aspects of JHF's projects, he answered as follows:

> One of our projects' Christian aspects is to teach values. For example, it is not right to have premarital sexual intercourse. It is important to be faithful to your partner. These are taught in the context of AIDS prevention. Forgiveness is important because it is related to health. Heart disease and high blood pressure result from stress. Health is actually related to one's value system. Also drunkenness and smoking relate to self-respect and self-control. In fact these are very big problems in Tibet. Education predicated on a health and ethical content was very well received by the locals. We don't push Christianity, but we do this work based on biblical values.[30]

This very answer demonstrates the way in which JHF translates its religious values and beliefs into projects. To JHF, evangelism and health education and literacy are two sides of a single coin. Most importantly, even though JHF attempts to spread health values, as long as it does not refer to these values as biblical in its projects, the Chinese government is content for the projects to go ahead. In this case, translation of the values is really the key to JHF's success in project design and implementation. This particular health education project, therefore, is one of the more convenient ways for JHF to spread its beliefs, without creating any friction between it and the atheist Chinese government.

From this perspective, the comment made by the Chief Executive Officer of JHF, Martin Klopper (2005a), is worth noting. He emphasizes JHF's focus on the spiritual aspect in development, as one of its contributions to building China.

> Not all social and economic development should be seen in terms of the 'hardware' that is delivered. In the initiatives that we are involved in, training forms a core component. Underlying this training is a commitment to see skills transferred and, often, integral to these skills are the values that under gird them.... In a very real sense, much of our training contributes to what we might call the 'software', not so much of 'material civilisation' but of 'spiritual civilisation'. It is not possible to have one without the other (Klopper 2005a).

This comment is highly pertinent to the broader focus of this thesis; that is, to the 'civilising mission'. As discussed in chapter one, the 'civilizing mission' is not a popular term among international NGOs today, but JHF still uses 'spiritual civilization' to describe the purpose of its training projects. JHF's version of 'spiritual civilization' is closely related to biblical values. This suggests that JHF aims to raise the level of the spiritual civilization of ethnic communities who have different religious faiths to the level of Christianity. JHF's activity can be identified as a Christian 'civilizing mission'

[30] Interview with International Director of the Jian Hua Foundation, 2 December 2004.

in the contemporary period, which attempts to promote 'spiritual civilization' centring on biblical values among ethnic communities in China.

Local Interactions

Downplaying Religious Communities

How the self-proclaimed Christian 'civilizing mission' is undertaken in practice is an interesting issue to explore in this case study, given that the case study village is composed of Tibetan Buddhists. The Tibetan people in this village are distinct from the Han in appearance, identity and religion among others. As discussed in Chapter Two, many contemporary 'minority nationalities' have been 'modernized' or 'sinicized', and do not necessarily appear to be distinct from the Han. Particularly those who live closer to eastern China, historically called 'China proper', often wear Western clothes, and many of them speak Mandarin. However, the Tibetans in this village seem to have kept their traditional way of life. They wear Tibetan clothing, speak Tibetan, and believe in Tibetan Buddhism. The village, even though it has only 180 households, has a monastery (see Photo 4.2), and the Buddhist monks are highly respected by the villagers.

JHF's community project centred on the Hongqi (红旗) Administrative Natural Village. In fact, the Communist government has had a significant impact on this village. For example, it is quite obvious in the name of the three administrative natural villages (*Xingzheng Ziran Cun* 行政自然村) within Xibusha Township; Hongqi (红旗), Tuanjie (团结) and Yuejin (跃进). The names of these villages mean Red Flag, Unity, and Leap Forward respectively. These names are symbolic words for Communist China; therefore it is clear that the Communist government established these Tibetan villages in 1953.[31]

The impact of the Communist government on these villages can also be seen in everyday life, for example in the illustrations hanging on the walls of some of the villagers' houses. I visited the house of a Hongqi village group leader (*duizhang* 队长) (Hongqi Village consists of six groups).[32] There are many posters and pictures on the walls of the group leader's house, and a prayer wheel (which Tibetan Buddhists spin while they pray) on his table. The posters and pictures include those of a yak in Heaven,

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31 Interview anonymous.

32 The County is called Da Dui (大队), big group; the Administrative Villages are called *Xiao Dui* (小队), small group; and groups equivalent to natural villages (in the Administrative Villages) are called *Dui* (队), group.

yaks on beautiful sunny grasslands, a Buddhist monk on the back of yak, a large picture of the Dalai Lama, many small pictures of the Panchen Lama and other Lamas, and a big poster of Mao Zedong. Intentionally or unintentionally, the picture of the Dalai Lama and Mao Zedong are on the walls at either end of the house, while the pictures of the yak in Heaven and so on are on the two other facing walls in the middle of the house. By way of another example of the Communist government's impact on these villages, Hongqi Village is surrounded by huge grassland, with many yaks at pasture. Extremely long wire fences demarcate the grassland, where there are neither buildings nor roads (see Photo 4.3). According to a JHF project coordinator, the government implemented a settlement policy in this area, and erected the wire fences. The Tibetans in this area were nomadic, but they now have houses to live in, and are settled in the areas prescribed by the wire fencing.[33]

In this community, villager committee members and Xibusha Township government officials reside in the top layer of the social hierarchy. They make decisions on the public affairs of the village. In contrast, another overlapping community at this village is one based on a belief in Tibetan Buddhism. This community overlaps with the Hongqi administrative natural village community. The difference is that this community centres on the Tibetan religious belief rather than on being a political construction, and the top layer of the social hierarchy within this community is comprised of Tibetan lamas and monks.

It is important to analyze the way JHF, with its strong Christian evangelical emphasis, has dealt with this Tibetan community. According to an explanation by a local Tibetan, the hierarchical social structure is understood as lamas and monks at the top, then villagers' committee members, and then local older men with experience.[34] Tibetan lamas and monks in this village have positions of great respect and power among the villagers. To illustrate the villagers' respect for the Buddhist monks, and the impact of the monks on JHF staff members, a JHF consultant's report on an early stage of the encounter between JHF and ethnic community is quite helpful:

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[33] Interview with Project Coordinator, Tongren Office, the Jian Hua Foundation, 4 November 2004.

[34] Interview (anonymous), 5 November 2004.

Photo 4.2: Monastery in Hongqi Village (taken by author)

Photo 4.3: Hongqi Village, Yaks and Wire Fences (taken by author)

> We [JHF associates and the consultant] had a walk around the village and bumped into the leading monk, who was thrilled by us having come and enthusiastically gave us a tour of the monastery. Afterwards, he himself gave us the Tibetan Kadakh. Walking back with the yellow Kadakh around our necks and answering people's questions as to who had given it to us, we had clearly gained in face and reputation. When we left the village the main leader, presumably because of this honourable treatment at the hands of the monk, did not want to appear to treat us any less respectfully than the top monk, and also gave us the Kadakh (JHF 2002b: 5).

It is clear from this description that cooperating with local religious leaders is a key to building a relationship with the local villagers in this village. Furthermore, JHF's associates conducted an analysis of the world view of five young nomad villagers from Xibusha County. Part of this analysis covered so called levels of 'being' in this world. The analysis was helpful in identifying ethnic community member understanding of, and very high respect for, lamas and monks. In response to a question on the levels of 'being', the ethnic community members answered:

1. Buddha (not involved in the matters of this world except for guiding people the right way)
2. Dalai Lama and other lamas (are not involved in the matters of this world except for guiding people the right way, are intermediaries between humans and Buddha)
3. Monks (just a little involved in the matters of this world, are also intermediary)
4. Small gods (are involved only in matters of this world, have control over normal people's lives and can help with practical problems of life)
5. Human beings
6. Devils (can cause trouble to human beings, e.g. possess a person many times which can lead to death over time, can cause accidents) (JHF ND)

Whether or not this understanding is theologically accurate, this is the hierarchy in which the ethnic community members believe. Therefore, the following comments by the ethnic community members interviewed by a JHF associate/consultant are quite understandable.

> When someone gets sick, the family goes to the lama first. The lama decides how to treat it (operate or not), and whether to direct a patient to a hospital (e.g. go to Xining, not Xiahe).
>
> Some people even consult the lama on such things as when to go on holiday, and whether to go at all. It's the same for conducting business or any other activity. Even if the lama's advice proves to be negative or unproductive, the lama's wisdom will not be doubted.
>
> Couples wanting to get married first consult the lama (JHF ND).

The ethnic community members' high level of respect for and trust in the lamas reveal how important the Tibetan Buddhist lamas and monks are in this village. The author

asked JHF's project coordinator whether Buddhist monks could have possibly played some role in JHF's projects, given that the Buddhist monks' cooperation with JHF would add some respect and trust to the relationship between JHF and villagers. Respect and a trusting relationship should increase the effectiveness of the project, and indeed, a trusting relationship is one of the objectives of this project. JHF's project coordinator replied that he had never thought of it, but that JHF cooperated with the local government. JHF and the local government had something in common, with respect to how they thought about people.[35] JHF's project coordinator mentioned that he simply did not think that JHF needed to cooperate with the Buddhist monks, because JHF always took a 'pragmatic' approach. For this purpose, cooperation with local government officials is enough. He mentioned that if the monks wanted to participate in JHF's projects, JHF would not exclude them. However he did not actively seek cooperation with the monks.[36] Even though he identified the most important points in the project as partnership and cooperation with local villagers, cooperation with Buddhist monks was overlooked in the process of implementing the project. Arguably, this attitude derived from not only downplaying the importance of local religious community, but also from a sense of the superiority of Christian evangelical values. As quoted earlier, one of the JHF's founders claimed, 'we hope that we will eventually make a Christian impression on Chinese Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists'.[37]

The fact that JHF overlooked the importance of the religious community in this village leads to the argument that JHF's understanding of 'community' is in accordance with the way the Communist government deals with the village. JHF preferred an understanding of 'community' that had a local government and a village committee at the top. The religious understanding of 'community', which has lamas and monks at the top, was not taken into account in JHF's project.

Participant Response to Project: Health and Literacy Trainings

As explained earlier, because JHF's project proposal strongly emphasized the necessity to undertake a needs assessment, such an assessment was designed as a part of the project and so a thorough project plan had not been prepared. However, at the time of proposal writing, JHF did identify two 'likely' programs, one being primary healthcare training, the other adult literacy (JHF 2002b). Having discussed project content with the

35 Interview with Project Coordinator, Tongren Office, the Jian Hua Foundation, 5 November 2004.

36 *Ibid.*

37 Interview with a founder of the Jian Hua Foundation, communication by telephone, 5 May 2006.

villagers, JHF began to implement these two 'likely' programs. As a result, these two programs had a positive impact on the ethnic community members insofar as it raised their awareness of the issues of health and literacy.

For health training, JHF translated into Tibetan a *Facts of Life* booklet provided by the World Health Organization, and taught twelve trainers in Hongqi Village basic health knowledge, using the booklet as a study guide. Having gained such knowledge, these twelve trainers went back to their village and taught 181 fellow villagers the same material. A JHF report reveals that the program was successful in conveying health knowledge that is, in the words of one trainee, 'useful and applicable to their lives' (JHF 2002: 7). One of the villagers whom I interviewed said that she remembered having learnt how to protect a mother's health during and after a pregnancy. Another villager said that he had learnt how to avoid disease. Both villagers admitted that they had learnt that washing their hands was important to avoiding diseases, but they just had not acquired the habit of washing their hands. They said that they just 'tended to forget'. Even though it is difficult to reform one's habits in the short term, changing the villagers' attitude to health issues is meaningful.

For literacy training, JHF originally planned that it would teach Tibetan literacy, but 'at the request of the leadership and the villagers of Hongqi village' the project provided basic Chinese language skills (mainly conversation, and a modicum of writing and reading skills) (JHF 2002b). According to a JHF report (2002b), some of the villagers were 'completely illiterate'; others had graduated from primary school and had acquired basic literacy skills. According to the local coordinator, participants were primary school graduates and had acquired basic literacy at primary school, and they had participated in the literacy project voluntarily.[38] However, 'initially, eighteen adults attended the class (one female, seventeen males), [but] by July 2004 the numbers had dropped to six students (one female, five males)' (JHF 2004a: 11).

Even though the number of participants was only small, my interviews with several of the villagers, which I conducted half a year after JHF's literacy project had been completed, left me with the impression that some villagers had a renewed interest in literacy education. These villagers actually did not participate in JHF's literacy program, but when I visited them, some of the villagers had gathered privately to look at a Tibetan language textbook. They pointed at some pictures and characters, and discussed things about the book. One of the villagers told me that the local government

[38] Interview with Project Coordinator, Tongren Office, the Jian Hua Foundation, 3 November 2004.

had just started a literacy program and that some villagers were studying the Tibetan language. The mother of this villager said, 'These guys cannot read anything, so they are the same as the yaks outside our house. When these guys can read, and in particular become literate in Mandarin, they can go to Tongren and sell and buy things'. I asked all the villagers there, 'If an NGO were to come here and conduct a project, what would you want it to do?' One of the villagers answered, without reservation, 'We want a school. We want a clinic too, but a school is the priority. Education is most important'.

These comments from the villagers are worth noting, because before JHF conducted its project, the majority of villagers wanted a clinic in the village (JHF 2002b). No one voted for a literacy project. It is not certain whether JHF's literacy project had directly generated the villagers' interest in literacy education, but JHF's project might have had an impact on the villagers' interest in literacy education. These responses of the ethnic community members to both health and literacy training reflect the features of the adaptation frame.

This point actually leads to another: that the longer-term impact of community development projects, such as changes in the villagers' attitudes towards health and literacy, cannot be properly assessed without follow-up evaluation sometime after the project ends, rather than immediately after. Most development NGOs usually conduct project evaluations immediately after the project formally ends. This is, of course, necessary for reporting to donors. However, development affects a variety of social issues, which are by their very nature extremely complicated, and any impact on social phenomena takes time to manifest. In order to explore the in-depth impact of a project, it is necessary to carry out a long-term analysis. It is only possible to assess in depth any change in the villagers' attitudes if one carries out a follow-up analysis some time after the project, even though it may not necessarily be possible to identify a direct causal relationship.

Local Reaction to Values: Trust

Even though the responses of ethnic community members who participated in the training reflect features of the adaptation frame, it seems that the interaction between JHF and the ethnic community members was not altogether smooth. This was particularly so in the earlier stages of the project. This section illustrates an interaction that reflects features of the conflict frame.

In JHF's health training project, JHF attempted to train health trainers. JHF's plan was to train trainers selected from among the members of the ethnic community and to have those trainers return to their own community to train their fellow villagers on completion of their own training. Therefore, those selected for training were to be highly motivated, respected and reliable from the local point of view. Accordingly, the JHF local coordinator asked village leaders, such as the village secretary, the deputy village leader, and the township secretary, to select ten villagers of either gender as potential health trainers, based on reliability, teaching ability and availability.

On the first training day, however, the JHF local coordinator discovered more than twenty young men in the room the training session was to be held in, 'some of whom were only present out of curiosity ... full of expectations and hopes about being selected to go to Tongren for training' (JHF 2002b: 2). There was not one woman, as 'the women are all busy milking cows' (JHF 2002b: 2). When JHF brought the imbalance and the excessive number of applicants to the attention of the village leaders, the leaders hurriedly rounded up some women. Then the JHF coordinator went ahead with the morning session.

While the villagers expected to be selected to receive training on health issues, JHF had a different aim for this particular session. It completed two exercises. One was to draw up a 'seasonality diagram', and the other was an 'historical time line exercise', both of which are tools used for participatory rural appraisals (PRAs) to gather information on project sites.[39] JHF's plan was to:

> come to know those people and do a few participatory exercises with them in order to 1) observe them interacting in a group discussion setting and thereby to narrow the group to one which would be most useful in the training, 2) gain data for project planning as a result of the PRA exercises (JHF 2002b: 2).

However, from the point of view of the villagers, these exercises were quite disappointing. They found the exercises 'entirely unrelated to what they had expected' (JHF 2002b: 3). The village leader noted that as a result of morning session, many young villagers felt a certain loss of face because of the unexpected selection process (JHF 2002b: 5).

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[39] The seasonality diagram is used for 'rainfall, cropping patterns, fodder use and availability, food availability, busy farming days, milk production, animal diseases and expenditures. The most valuable data revolve around the cropping patterns and busy farm days, since these data were found to be essential in the detailed planning of activities implementation' (Chapa *et. al.* 1997). The historical time line exercise provides 'information on ethno-history, and history of forest, cropping systems, livestock, and issues like major landslides' (Chapa *et. al.* 1997).

Despite this session, one purpose of which was to identify suitable health trainers, JHF failed to identify any suitable trainers. Therefore, it had the primary school headmaster of the village select seven villagers. The headmaster had taught almost everyone in the village, and therefore he knew the villagers fairly intimately.

JHF's project coordinator later offered an apology to the village leaders for any misunderstanding over the purpose of the session. A JHF consultant who accompanied the coordinator wrote a report of the incident, in which he admitted, '[w]e might have lost somewhat in our relationship with the local young men', while 'our relationship with the headmaster as well as [with] the village leader appears to be very good' (JHF 2002b: 5).

This incident occurred in the first year of this project, and whether or not the relationship between JHF and the local young men recovered afterwards is unclear. However, what is important for our discussion is which features of which frame the interactions between JHF and the ethnic communities reflected. While JHF's interaction with the village leaders reflected features of the adaptation frame, its interaction with the local young men reflected features of the conflict frame. There were arguably at least three reasons for this. The first and main reason was inadequate communication among the JHF associates, the villagers, the village leaders and government officials. This led to the lack of a proper understanding by the villagers and the village leaders of the reason for the JHF activity. This also speaks to the fact that JHF did not use a local Tibetan actor as its primary project coordinator. JHF did have local staff members, but their main tasks were interpreting and translating, rather than designing and implementing the projects, and they were merely secondary to the project coordinator. JHF's local coordinator was an English speaker. One of the JHF directors revealed that 'if the locals are not Christians, they may not be able to become leaders of projects'.[40] It seems that prioritizing Christian personnel in this way led to features of the conflict frame appearing in the interaction between the parties involved.

The second reason for the appearance of features of the two frames relates to JHF's neglect of the religiously-oriented ethnic community. What should be also noted in relation to JHF's approach to establish a trusting relationship is that, again, it lacked any attempt to engage with the religiously-oriented ethnic community; more specifically to get involved with the Tibetan monks, whom the ethnic community members obviously highly respected. I am not suggesting that JHF would not have had similar

[40] Interview with International Director of the Jian Hua Foundation, 2 December 2004.

problems if it had established a close relationship with the local religious leader, if only because I am unable to provide specific evidence in relation to JHF. However, given the amount of literature suggesting that there is a fairly high level of solidarity within religiously-oriented communities in China, and that solidarity may play a secular role in providing welfare for the people of the community (Yang 1963), the positive impact of a close relationship with the religiously-oriented ethnic communities in order to establish a trusting relationship was certainly worth JHF's consideration. This is particularly so given the high level of trust in and respect for the Buddhist monks among the members of the ethnic community. However, JHF did not make any attempt to establish a close relationship, or even to consider the possibility that such a relationship would have raised the level of trust of the ethnic community members and may well thereby have mitigated the problem mentioned above. Such neglect is, arguably, not inconsistent with the JHF's sense of the superiority of Christianity over other religions, which was discussed earlier.

The third reason for the appearance of the features of the conflict frame in the interaction between JHF and the local young men relates to the fact that JHF's project did not particularly emphasize the importance of 'participation'. While the project drew on the PRA method, JHF did not pay much attention to 'participation' in the sense of motivating the ethnic community members to voluntarily participate in the project, on the basis of an understanding of the importance of the project. 'Participation' used in this project merely amounted to what Cornwall (1996) calls 'cooptation' which refers to no more than that representatives of the villagers were chosen.

JHF's project coordinator was, in fact, very bluntly critical of the concept of 'participation'. He wrote:

> At the grassroots level, development projects must have local ownership. But does this mean that the training project itself must be all their idea? Development workers go to communities with many good ideas, lots of resources education and skills. So although the local community are [*sic*] able to express a general need, they are not able to know exactly how this need might be met. And so the development worker must apply a lot of wisdom, in putting together an appropriate package that is going to meet the felt need. Again, this must be done in consultation with the community, but the content of the package is primarily the responsibility of the development worker (JHF 2004c: 5).

It is necessary to assess these comments on two levels. On one level, it needs to be said that JHF's project coordinator was critical of the hypocrisy of a lot of development workers who use a participatory approach to their projects. Usually, project content does not spring from the ideas of the villagers. Rather, it is often designed by the

international religious agencies, which try to make it look as though the villagers engaged in a participatory process in order to arrive at the future design. On the second level, however, this comment reveals a sense of the 'superiority' of development worker resources and knowledge to those of the local villagers. An example of this is reflected in a JHF preference for the use of Western medicine rather than Tibetan medicine in a hospital in Hongqi Village. In response to questions about the reason for a preference for Western medicine, JHF's local coordinator stated without reservation that he would not want to be cured by Tibetan medicine, if he, himself, were sick. He added that JHF had expertise in Western medicine.[41] However, this second point suggests that JHF's priorities are confused. The fact that JHF has expertise in Western medicine should not prevent the undertaking of projects that call for the use of Tibetan medicine. In the context of the coordinator's comments, one might conclude that at least the coordinator has a sense of the superiority of Western knowledge over Tibetan knowledge.

Local Reaction to Religious Values

Other important questions are whether and if so how JHF's project affected the religious beliefs of the villagers, and how the ethnic communities responded to the Christian nature of JHF. First, it is important to identify how the project's 'holistic approach', emphasized in JHF's project proposal, manifested itself in the course of the project. Information on specific examples of any holistic content was by and large unavailable. Lack of such information is probably attributable to the high level of political sensitivity surrounding the project. The following entry appears in JHF's internal report on the health training session:

> After the training... [the project coordinator] shared the story of a lost son, which was very well received and readily understood by all trainees. [The project coordinator's] point was that not only physical but also social health (e.g. in relationships) is important (JHF 2000).

The story of the lost son comes from the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 15, Verses 11-32. I was unable to get to the heart of how, and in which health context, the project coordinator shared this story, and whether he mentioned its Biblical origin, but this example is suggestive of how the project's holistic content may have manifested itself.

In my interview with the villagers who participated in the project, I asked what it was that they had learnt from the training. No villager referred to any 'spiritual' aspect, and it was difficult to fathom any extent to which the Bible story might have made a

[41] Interview with Project Coordinator, Tongren Office, the Jian Hua Foundation, 5 November 2004.

difference to the community. On the balance of probabilities, it is unlikely to have had any lasting impact on the villagers' belief in Tibetan Buddhism, or on their perception of Christianity.

It is important to note, also, that JHF failed to account for Tibetan Buddhism's view of its holistic approach to project management. JHF's holistic content was defined by the Bible, but there was no apparent effort to connect an holistic Christian view to an holistic Tibetan Buddhist view. By way of a contrast, for example, Matteo Ricci, one of the better-known Christian missionaries in China in the sixteenth century had 'the idea that the ethical content of the Confucian Classics proved the Chinese were a deeply moral nation and had once practised a form of monotheism not so different from that found in the Judaeo-Christian tradition' (Spence 1990: 113), and Ricci evangelized in China using Confucian thought.

Story of a Widow

In an examination of the holistic approach it is crucial to discuss what the project coordinator was doing *other than* implementing the health and literacy training. It was, after all, these on which the project centred. What he did outside the scope of the approved project mattered from the points of view of both JHF and the villagers. Any religious impact cannot be assessed merely on the basis of a Bible story taken out of its social context. How messages of love and care are conveyed in a real and human context is a much better basis on which to proceed.

For example, in this village lived a widow whose husband had died of tuberculosis. She had four children, two of whom also suffered with the disease. Since the death of her husband, the family, already extremely poor, had had to ask other villagers for food assistance. According to the JHF project coordinator, the local villagers told him that if he would like to help someone, he should help the widow. He called this 'local initiative'.[42]

The coordinator bought two twenty-kilogram of bags of flour in Tongren, about one and half hours away from the village. I accompanied him on his trip to deliver them to the widow's house by jeep. Her house was in the middle of grassland. There were no other houses nearby. Nor was there a road running to her house. As the jeep approached her house across the grassland, the widow rushed out and lay across the wire fence circumscribing her land, enabling the coordinator to approach much closer than

[42] Interview with Project Coordinator, Tongren Office, the Jian Hua Foundation, 4 November 2004.

otherwise. I could see, even before we reached the fence, how extremely happy she looked, waving at us frantically as she ran to the fence with a big smile on her face. When the coordinator, other JHF local officers, and I got out of the jeep, she happily welcomed us and ushered us into her house. She treated all of us to Tibetan milk tea, and incessantly smiled at us. The vigour of her welcome frankly amazed me. I had not seen a villager welcome people with such an obvious expression of joy. It was as if she was expressing something more than happiness for receiving what to her was more than mere material gain. Although this occasion is not easily offered up as evidence of something spiritual resulting from the association of the widow and the project activity of JHF, the sense I have of the atmosphere I observed goes well beyond a simple thankyou transaction to a much deeper sense of spiritual gratitude, very much warm and wholehearted. Inside her house, the project coordinator deposited the bags of flour, and picked up a couple of bags of yak dung, which the villagers use for fuel. The widow had collected the yak dung for sale, but had no means of transporting it to the markets. The JHF project coordinator delivered the bags of yak dung to the local town, and sold them for her, something he does from time to time.

Such simple transactions can be expected to make people happy and perhaps even grateful and clearly the widow looked extremely happy. But the happiness went beyond simple happiness to something else. This something else could be interpreted as being cared about – in JHF's word, as 'compassion'. This particular exchange resonates with Mother Teresa's famous words, '[t]he world today is hungry not only for bread but hungry for love; hungry to be wanted, to be loved'. It seemed to me at the time, and there remains a lingering sense of the superabundance of emotion associated with the actions of the JHF coordinator: that JHF staff made a difference, not only in terms of the short-term food supply, but also from the point of view that someone cared about this widow. This widow was one of only very few, perhaps even the only person in the village who was personally visited by JHF, and who personally received direct material help. From the widow's point of view, it seems that the importance of this visit went well beyond her simple material needs to embrace a deeper human need for spiritual recognition of any kind.

The JHF coordinator was critical about the fact that the majority of development professionals espouse the concepts of non-dependency and sustainability (long-term effect), regardless of the situation on the ground. 'Development' is much favoured, while welfare is overlooked. However, in reality, the conditions of people vary widely within one village, from abject poverty to relatively well off. 'It is meaningless to

undertake development in places where there is scarce food, and aid [welfare] is more appropriate. It is necessary to tailor the project and make the project fit the situation'.[43]

Critics of welfare would argue that even though the project coordinator made a difference in the widow's life, it was a difference in the life of only one person, and that providing welfare alone is unsustainable and ineffective in the longer term. Conventionally, it is argued that aiming at long-term sustainability is more important than aiming for a short-term impact. However, if one were to stick to the principle of long-term sustainable development, the widow may not have had her significant encounter, and perhaps would have been overlooked.

The project coordinator's written reflections on community development (JHF 2004c: 6) reveal how he thinks about spiritual impact on community development.

> Project staff members bring their own personal values with them into the project, and these values flow into the project. For example, respect for others, and compassion, are two positive values which readily flow into the community. In like manner, the values of the local community touch the lives of the project staff.
>
> The local people not only learn from the ideas that we formally express, but they also learn from the people who express them. It is universal law that people impact each other as they interact with each other, and study each other, and learn from each other – this is the very nature of any interpersonal relationship. It is not a planned thing – it happens automatically – whether we like or not.
>
> If we are intentional in our modelling, then this is good. Obviously we need to model respect, patience, kindness, faithfulness, and morality. These things are not usually written about in training manuals on community development – however the potential for impact (positive and/or negative) in these areas is great. This is *empowerment*, where positive values are passed on through interaction, and everyone moves forward. At the end of the day, it may well be that the deeper of the relationships formed will have more 'impact' than the 'project' we do! (my emphasis)

His use of the term 'empowerment' in a spiritual sense is very different from how the term is discussed in mainstream development literature (Arnstein 1969; Pretty 1995), in which the concept of 'empowerment' is intricately linked to a higher level of participation, such as self-mobilization.

It is difficult to assess the extent to which the villagers may have understood the importance of spiritual health, or more explicitly, the extent to which the villagers may have recognized any Biblical message in JHF's project. The evidence suggests that the ethnic community members did not perceive the 'spiritual aspect' as relating to Christianity. From this point of view, the response of the ethnic community to JHF's

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[43] Interview with Project Coordinator, Tongren Office, the Jian Hua Foundation, 5 November 2004.

values does not reflect the features of either the conflict frame or the adaptation frame. These frames were built based on the assumption that the values could be presented clearly. However, in the context of mainland China today, religious values have to be presented subtly, as described above, and whether JHF's religious message reached to the heart of the ethnic community members was not certain. This aspect will be mentioned again when I revisit the frames of interaction in the conclusion of this thesis.

However, the certain fact is that JHF did make a difference to the widow. It is difficult to measure the difference because of its spiritual nature. The widow's story suggests that both 'development' and 'welfare' are important in a very poor village. Practising compassion, caring and instilling hope by making an effort to help even a small number of people in small ways can make a big difference to some. The coordinator appeared to have been successful in demonstrating 'compassion' to the widow. This may have been the most important value JHF imparted to her. From this point of view, the interaction between JHF and the widow reflects features of the adaptation frame.

Conclusion

JHF's sense of the superiority of its own civilization, in particular, the superiority of Christianity over other religions, is evident from my analysis of the perception of its personnel in the field. JHF describes its activity as promoting 'spiritual civilization'. My analysis suggests that the idea of the 'civilizing mission' is still alive today and continues to be undertaken in mainland China.

This chapter has also explored the fact that JHF places a strong emphasis on the importance of evangelism. Within the Chinese context, the manifestation of evangelism was only subtle in the course of interaction with the ethnic community members; and the extent to which the respondents picked up on the message of the gospel was evidently very limited. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the JHF local coordinator did leave a very strong impression on a widow living in dire poverty by demonstrating the 'love of Jesus'. The fact that the interaction between JHF and the widow reflected features of the adaptation frame is indicative that an international religious NGO can still have a religious impact, in the broader sense, at an individual level.

The way the ethnic communities responded to JHF activity and the values imported through the JHF project reflects the features of both the conflict and the adaptation frames. The relevance of each frame depended on the way in which

community was understood by the external agents. JHF preferred a community based on the administrative-natural village and there was a high degree of dialogue between the JHF local coordinator and the project participants who were at the top of the village hierarchy. However, in relation to the young men in the village, one of the values that JHF's project aimed to establish, a trusting relationship, was not successfully carried through; this situation reflected features of the conflict frame.

The difference between the adaptation and conflict frames reveals two fundamental points about the interaction between JHF and ethnic communities. The first is that JHF defined 'community' in reference to a hierarchical system based on formal local governance structures, with local government and the villagers' committee at the top. However, a community based on the religious beliefs of the villagers, with the Tibetan monks at the top of the hierarchy, was completely neglected. The second point is that the lack of dialogue between JHF and the ethnic community members, particularly those who did not participate in the JHF project, hindered the building of a trusting relationship between the two. Both points are in fact closely related to each other. To establish a trusting relationship, it would have been important to at least have considered cooperating with the local Tibetan monks, who enjoy a high level of respect among the ethnic community members—in other words, to have engaged with the community that centred on local religious belief.

CHAPTER FIVE

NEGLECT OF LOCAL BRETHREN BY AN INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN NGO: THE SALVATION ARMY

Origins, Values and Beliefs

To describe the origins of The Salvation Army, one should begin with the way the founder, William Booth, started and organized the activity of the Army.[1] Booth was born in 1829 into a working class family in Nottingham, England. Throughout his childhood the family was desperately poor, and Nottingham was full of 'breathless tales of murder and garrottings', and 'surging drunken crowds watching the hanging of criminals' (Begbie 1920: 2). This was a period of rapid urbanisation and increasing social problems in England, brought about by the Industrial Revolution and increased immigration from Ireland (Horridge 1993: 9-11). In 1842, at the age of thirteen, Booth started working as a pawnbroker in the Nottingham slums. In 1846 he began to attend a Wesleyan Methodist chapel, and was deeply influenced by the Rev James Caughey, an American revivalist evangelist who was visiting Nottingham at the time. Revivalism generally refers to a movement that started in the sixteenth century in some Protestant churches to revitalize the spiritual ardour of masses (Livingstone 2000: 493). Caughey was one of the representative figures of eighteenth century revivalism, peculiarly known as the Second Great Awakening. This was characterized by 'camp meetings', a unique frontier institution aimed at evangelizing working class people. Encouraged by Caughey to start street meetings and to work for the conversion of others, Booth committed himself to evangelizing and helping the working class poor in England.[2] The Methodist church, which tended to overlook problems among the working class and in the slums in those days, did not welcome Booth's evangelical approach because it led to disturbance and criticism within the church.

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1 Catherine Booth, William's wife, was with her husband a co-founder of The Salvation Army; her role in its foundation was particularly notable for the enormous amount of work she carried out caring for women, something for which The Salvation Army was well known.

2 Booth's enthusiasm for revivalism eventually led him to become a preacher in the Reform Movement in 1852, a movement derived from Methodism but excluded from mainstream Methodist churches because it over paid attention to working class people. However, he left the Reform Movement after a year or so because he realized that 'unless the Reform Movement became organized and set up a central authority he would have to leave it and attach himself to some Church that possessed these essentials of stability' (Booth; cited in Horridge 14). His quest for an organized central authority in the movement is an early hint at the establishment of The Salvation Army in 1878. After he

The deteriorating social environment encouraged Booth to seriously consider the role of Christianity in social work (Hempton 1984: 307). In 1865, he worked as part of the Home Mission Movement, which consisted of volunteers from various denominations. The aim of this mission was to preach to the poor of the working class in East London. As Booth described it, his preaching was conducted in 'a dilapidated tent' in a one-time (Quaker) graveyard' (Horridge 1920: 15). His preaching enjoyed great success and attracted large numbers of listeners.[3] As a result, he was asked to take charge of the Home Mission Movement, and from this was born The Salvation Army.[4] As the name suggests, The Salvation Army was an organization institutionalized along military lines, with William Booth as the General and with highly centralized control and power.[5]

The values The Salvation Army has had since its establishment are reflected in its identity as an 'international movement', as distinct from a formal church organization. Booth explained his reason for this as follows:

> In the north of England ... a clergyman said ... that it is evident The Salvation Army is not a church. To be a church there must evidently be the exercise of sacramental functions, which evidently are not duly appreciated by the Army (Booth; quoted in The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory 2005).

The Salvation Army has not exercised any sacramental functions, such as communion and baptism, since 1883.[6] The major reason for this is that it focuses on inward faith and salvation, rather than outward signs of spiritual grace.[7]

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withdrew from the Reform Movement, he became a preacher of the Methodist New Connexion in 1854.

3 Booth describes the Home Mission Movement as 'a miniature Salvation Army' (1889: 9). With regard to the characteristics and activity of the Home Mission Movement, Booth wrote as follows: 'Our (Booth's and his 'comrades') plan of operation was simplicity itself. We obtained the loan of cottages, and in these held meetings every night, always commencing with an open-air address, fine weather or foul, all the year round, inviting the people indoors for another meeting. Here again we had lively songs, short and sharp exhortations insisting upon decision for Christ upon the spot, which was to be signified by coming out and kneeling at the round table that stood in the middle of the room. These efforts were accompanied by visitation of the sick and of the convents, whose names and addresses were always recorded, together with processions to the big chapel on the Sunday, which the respectable authorities of the society soon compelled us to take in at the back door where the free seats were. When our converts died, we had Salvation funerals; placing the coffin in the street, singing around it, and holding another meeting at the grave when the parson had done' (Horridge 1993: 17).

4 It was renamed The Salvation Army in 1878, when Booth introduced the institutional structure into the Home Mission Movement. In the period from 1865 to 1868, Booth changed the movement's name to the Christian Revival Association, to the East London Revival Association, and to the East London Christian Mission. In 1868 the name became The Christian Mission, and this name lasted until 1878.

5 Because of its military style, The Salvation Army describes its religious activity in military terms. For example, 'corps' refers to church and 'to invade' refers to 'send missionaries'.

6 Walker (2001: 117-19) reveals that, when The Army was established, it instructed all officers to offer communion monthly. However, its attention to the equality between men and women posed a challenge to explain why women were permitted to perform the sacrament ritual. The Army

Catherine Booth wrote:

> What an inveterate tendency there is in the human heart to trust in outward forms, instead of inward grace! And when this is the case, what a hindrance rather than help have these forms proved to the growth, nay to the very existence, of that spiritual life which constitutes the real and only force of Christian experience (Sandall 1964: 130).

In addition, the Army's values are, as Booth insisted, that churches should take an active role in tackling social injustice, that the Army should not follow the established church, which accommodates mainly upper classes. Rejection of any identity as a church also came from Booth's antagonism towards the ecclesiastical bodies that had rejected him and the classes of people he had set out to save (Murdoch 1985: 377). In sum, the Army's identity as an 'international movement' derived from the fact that it did not exercise sacramental functions, but focused on inward faith and salvation, and that Booth resisted the established church, and promoted the fundamental values in which the founders of The Salvation Army believed.

In the 1880s, The Salvation Army's work expanded its scope in two directions. The first was a greater focus on social issues. As Murdoch (1985: 436) explains:

> The Army turned from a singular concern for revivalism to work to save "fallen women" drunkards, and released prisoners. By 1888 Booth was preaching not only individual salvation from sin, but salvation from a diseased environment which perpetuated a pattern of evil in urban slums.

It was at this moment that The Salvation Army formulated the values that have continued until today: a mixture of evangelism with an emphasis on inward faith and salvation, and a belief that it is more properly the mission of churches to tackle social injustice.

The second direction was geographical. Its activity expanded from the slums of East London to encompass the United Kingdom, British colonies, the United States, Europe and Scandinavia. The Army had 'invaded' thirty-four countries by 1890, and

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answered with its theological understanding that the Lord's own principle there being 'neither male nor female' in Christ Jesus is fully acted upon. Walker (2001: 118) explains that '[p]aradoxically, the very theological understanding that made it possible for women to offer communion also led Salvationists to believe that it was redundant'.

7 As other relatively minor reasons, the Army states as follows: (1) The Bible does not have basis for regarding the sacraments as essential to salvation or Christian living, nor does it show that Jesus intended that sacramental practices should have become fixed ceremonies; (2) The sacraments had been a divisive influence in the Church throughout Christian history, and at times the cause of bitter controversy and abuse; (3) Some churches do not allow women to administer the sacraments. The Army, however, believed that women could place an equal part in its ministry, and did not want to compromise this stance; (4) The Society of Friends (the Quakers) had managed to live holy lives without the use of sacraments; (5) Many early-day converts to the Army had previously been alcoholics. It was considered unwise to tempt them with the wine used in Holy Communion (The Salvation Army United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland 2005).

pursued in its 'invasion' the dual objectives of spiritual and physical salvation. Booth was 'building a benevolent empire, a Christian Imperium' (Murdoch 1985: 421).

Encounter with China: Reformulation of Identity on the Surface?

William Booth intended to make China part of the Christian Imperium, but he was unable to 'invade' China during his lifetime. In 1912, he charged his son and successor, Bramęwell Booth, to make the 'invading' of China one of his first official acts as the new General (Jeffries 1918: 301-02). The outbreak of World War I delayed the 'invasion', so the first contingent, consisting of forty international officers, did not leave London until 1915.[8] Illustration 5.1 shows the farewell service for missionary officers who set off to China at that time. The headline 'For the Salvation of China's Millions!' reflects very clearly the values the Army had before it went to China, and that it took with it as its mission.

Commissioner Charles H. Jeffries represented The Salvation Army on its first mission to China, landing with his officers in Beijing in 1916 (see Photograph 5.1). Having received language education, they began to evangelize the Chinese, and according to Jeffries (1918: 303), 'a splendid body of converts [was] won'.

The evangelical activity The Salvation Army undertook in the Republican period was the same as it had undertaken in England. As expressed in *The Chinese Recorder* (1918: 765), '[w]ith flag flying, drum and tambourine beating, cornet playing and hearty singing, we marched down the streets'. The Army's evangelical work continued and it gradually raised its presence in China. For example, in the 1920s, General Feng Yuxiang, a Guomindang General known as the 'Christian General', extended an invitation to The Salvation Army to conduct evangelical meetings with his troops. 'Under his command were fifty thousand soldiers', and 'his wish was that all would know Christ' (Yee 2005: 22-23).

. Although Booth's power in the Christian Imperium was centralized under a military style leadership, as its General, Booth was also aware of the need to 'indigenize' the Army, stating, 'we have no right to impose Western notions on the Eastern peoples', since that would be 'the sheerest folly [and] practical tyranny' (Booth; quoted in Murdoch 1985: 422). In an article published in the *Missionary Yearbook* of 1918, Jeffries explains the Army's standpoint on the issue of 'indigenization'.

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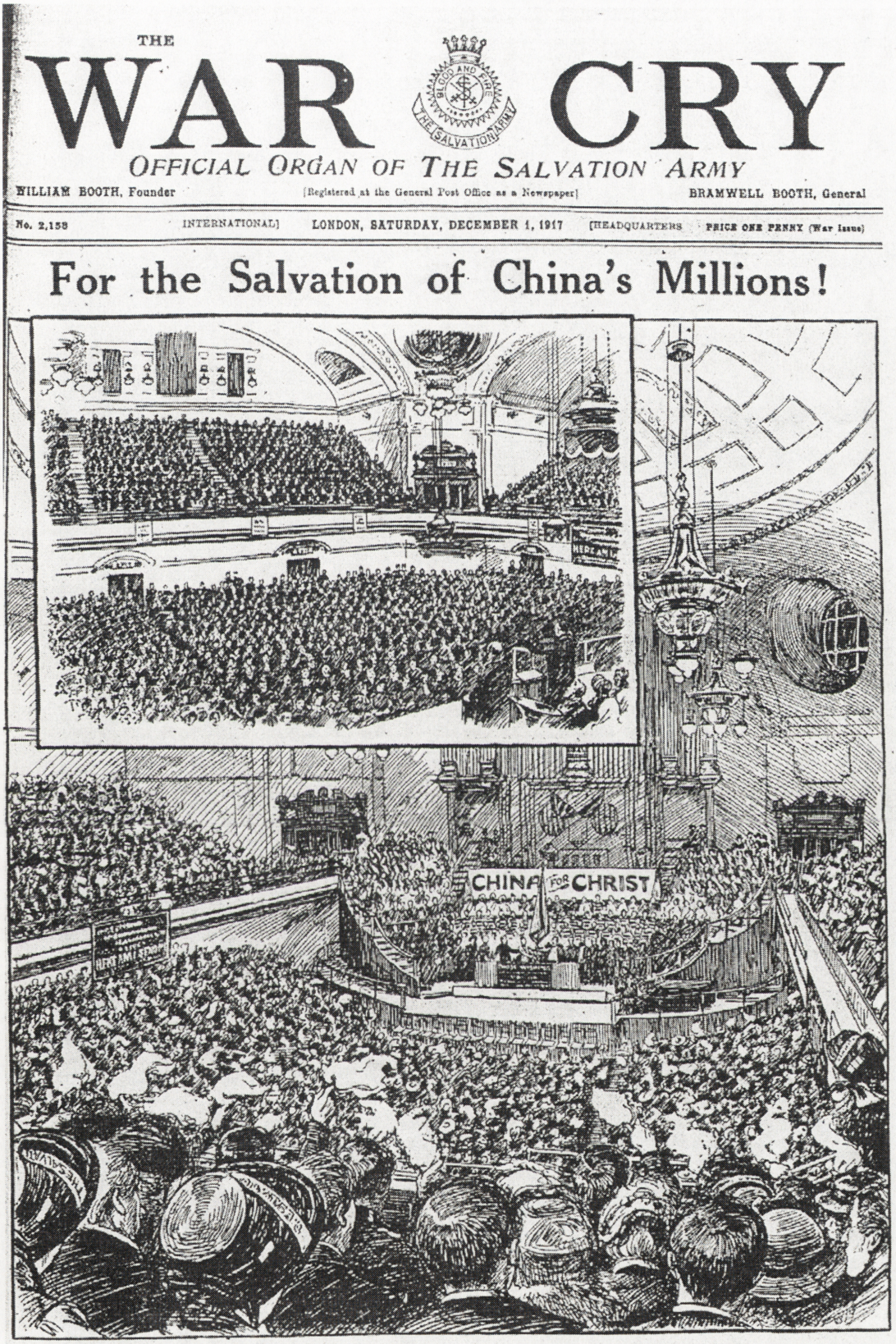
[8] The forty officers represented nine different countries: England, Canada, America, Scotland, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia and New Zealand (Jeffries 1918: 302).

Illustration 5.1: 'For the Salvation of China's Millions!'



THE
WAR CRY
OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SALVATION ARMY

WILLIAM BOOTH, Founder [Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper] BRAMWELL BOOTH, General

No. 2,158 INTERNATIONAL] LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1917 [HEADQUARTERS PRICE ONE PENNY (War Issue)

For the Salvation of China's Millions!

The Chief of the Staff Dedicating Outgoing Missionary Officers in the Central Hall, Westminster.
Inset: Commissioner Jeffries Delivering his Farewell Message

Source: *The War Cry: Official Organ of The Salvation Army*, 1 December 1917.

Photograph 5.1: Uniform of The Salvation Army Officer in China (Commissioner Charles H. Jeffries)

Source: Yee (2005:7).

> The "Memorandum of Appointment" that General Bramewell Booth gave to Charles Jeffries, the first Commissioner for China, clearly expresses the principle of the indigenisation of The Salvation Army: Chinese customs must be followed as far as is considered necessary to the successful working of The Salvation Army in the Territory.
>
> Chinese officers should be raised, trained and pushed forward. They must be made to feel that they are loved, trusted, believed in, given opportunities and responsibilities suited to their capacities.
>
> You must seek to make the people feel that our object is to raise up an Army of Chinese, which shall, as part of the world-wide Salvation Army, take its share in the salvation of the rest of the world (Jeffries 1918: 303).

However, the 'indigenization' referred to above resulted in only superficial changes. The first and most obvious change was to indigenize the appearance of the Army's officers. Photograph 4.1 is a 1918 photograph of a uniform of The Salvation Army, in which Commissioner Jeffries is wearing Chinese clothes and a Manchurian hat with the words 'The Salvation Army' written on it in Chinese (*Jiu Shi Jün* 救世軍).[9] He explains the reason for adopting the Chinese costume as follows:

> That such a costume will enable the foreign officers to associate themselves more closely with the Chinese in general and their colleagues in particular, will help to undermine the idea that Westernization and Christianity are one and the same thing, and will emphasize the fact that the Chinese Christians are not following foreigners when they become Christians (*The Chinese Recorder* 1918: 765).[10]

His distinguishing of Westernization from Christianity is reminiscent of the values of Christian missionaries discussed in Chapter Three. As noted, late nineteenth century Christian missionaries at first tended to separate Christianity from Western civilization, but later in the early twentieth century these become merged through a modification of their values (see Chapter Three: 86-90). The Salvation Army, as an evangelical organization, however, still adhered to the distinction between Christianity and Westernization.

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[9] I cannot identify the exact process of translation of the name to '*Jiu Shi Jün*'. However, according to the *Dictionary of History of Christianity in Japan* (*Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Dai Jiten* 日本キリスト教歴史大辞典), Ozaki Yukio (尾崎行雄) wrote an newspaper article on the Salvation Army, and translated it as 'Kyū Sei Gun', Japanese reading using the same Chinese characters, in 1879. When Ozaki was the Mayer of Tokyo City from 1903 to 1912, he welcomed William Booth's visit to Tokyo. Considering the fact that it was not until 1918 that The Salvation Army went to China, and there are so many other English terms translated in Japanese first and spread to China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the term '*Jiu Shi Jün*' might be adopted from Japanese translation. The Officer Commanding The Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, also stated that the term '*Jiu Shi Jun*' came from Japanese, because before The Salvation Army 'invaded' China in 1918, some Japanese members of The Salvation Army visited China. Interview with the Officer Commanding The Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, Hong Kong, 16 December 2005.

[10] A similar explanation was given in Jeffries (1918: 304).

The Army's strong commitment to Christianity is also clear in the following quote from Jeffries:

> We shall be guided entirely by the question as to whether it will contribute to the work of winning the children and their parents to Christ. Education as an end in itself, and that does not lead to the acceptance of Christ, has no place in our program (1918: 308).

The need to distinguish Westernization from Christianity derived not only from the point of view of the Army's values, grounded as they were in Christianity, but also from the intention underpinning the plan to indigenize itself.

The second action in the Army's effort to indigenize itself was an attempt at self-funding by the Chinese people. The majority of funding still came from IHQ in London,[11] but the fact that some was generated domestically is worth noting because it differs from the situation today, in which no funding is raised from the Chinese public. According to Commissioner Jeffries (1918: 305), 'contrary to all the warnings we had received as to the congregations leaving if we asked for money, in no case did this happen'. Efforts to self-fund continued into the 1940s. For example, when the Army ran a Porridge Kitchen feeding 800 to 900 people daily in Chefoo, over $10,000.00 was required, and 'considerably more than half of this sum was donated by local residents (*The Chinese Recorder* 1941: 619).

When the Communists came to power in 1949, the activity of The Salvation Army in China was suspended. When Chinese religious leaders such as Wu Yaozong (吴耀宗) began to discuss the Three Self Movement in China, Colonel Ludbrook, the North China territorial leader of the Army, suggested that the Army institute its own Three-Self Movement. As was feared, however, the international connection had to be broken. The Army members regarded separation from the international connection as a crisis. The IHQ wrote, '[t]he Army in China is passing through momentous days. Far-reaching changes are taking place and full responsibility for the continuance of the Army's work will soon be placed entirely on national officers' (Brown 1988: 128). Ludbrook realized that eviction was imminent, and therefore appointed four Chinese 'trustees'. In December 1951, '[a]ll Salvation Army operations were officially turned over to the *Chinese* Salvation Army' (*Zhong Hua Jiu Shi Jün* 中華救世軍) (Zhonghua Jiu Shi Jün 1951; Brown 1988: 132; Yin 1982).

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[11] Interview with the Officer Commanding The Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, Hong Kong, 16 December 2005.

The Chinese Salvation Army continued its evangelical work in China without international connections until July 1958. By that time, however, all the distinctive features of individual groups, such as the military appurtenances of The Salvation Army, had to be surrendered (Bush 1970: 232; Jones 1962: 155-57). The property of the Chinese Salvation Army was transferred to the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) (Yin 1982). Until the Salvation Army in the United States entered China in 1988, the Chinese Salvation Army officers who survived the Cultural Revolution had spent a great deal of time in isolation from their overseas roots. The Salvation Army Hong Kong, however, survived throughout the expulsions from mainland China. It was first established in Guangdong 1930 as the South China Command. The Salvation Army was requested to meet the needs of the desperate women of Hong Kong.[12] The Command changed its location to Hong Kong Island in 1939, and later moved to its current headquarters in Kowloon (The General of The Salvation Army 2004).

The Salvation Army (California Corps in the United States) returned to mainland China in 1988, some decades after having been expelled from China in the 1950s. It offered disaster relief to Gengma County (耿馬县), in Yunnan Province after a serious earthquake there and used the opportunity to re-establish a good relationship with the Chinese government. In 1991, The Salvation Army in Hong Kong took charge of operations, and then set up regional offices on the mainland in Kunming in 1996 and in Beijing in 2001. Today, Army projects on the mainland are still supervised by its Headquarters in Hong Kong.

Values Outside Mainland China Today

The Salvation Army today still supports its founder's approach to religious and social welfare activity. The fundamental values established over one-hundred and fifty years ago, which include simplicity, concern for the poor, no sacramental functions, no baptism and no alcohol, remain important today. Its slogan, 'Heart to God, Hand to Man' epitomizes such values. This slogan derives from its international mission statement, as follows:

> The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by love for God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and

[12] This work, pioneered by Majors Dorothy Brazier and Doris Lemon, was initially (until the establishment of the South China Command in Guangdong in 1935) directed from Beijing in order to promote broad ranging evangelistic and welfare operations.

> meet human needs in his name without discrimination (The General of The Salvation Army 2004).

Although the Army is committed to evangelism, the meeting of human needs, or 'hand to man', is also integral to its values. It is essential to note that the mission to 'meet human needs' refers to not only physical needs, but also emotional and spiritual needs. The two missions, to 'preach the gospel' and to 'meet human needs', are inseparable. Meeting human needs is also regarded as a religious activity from The Salvation Army's point of view.

Clearly, in the current political context in China, the Army is not permitted to conduct religious activity. An address by The Salvation Army's General John Larsson in 2005, in which he mentions the Army's work in China, reveals how The Salvation Army deals with this problem.

> There are a hundred million Christians already in China and The Salvation Army has been working there, meeting human needs, for nearly 20 years – running all kinds of projects: wells, agricultural, medical and educational projects. We've built 120 schools in China. Three thousand children are sponsored there, and our hope and our prayer and our focus is [*sic*] that we may be able to go into China in the fullness of what The Salvation Army is. In the meantime we are establishing ourselves. *We're preaching the gospel with our hands in China* (Larsson 2005; my emphasis).

How should his expression 'preaching the gospel with our hands in China' be interpreted? If this expression is understood literally, it refers to activity that would be considered illegal in China. Obviously, this expression does not mean that the Army preaches the gospel publicly on the open street, as it did in the Republican period. According to Larsson, what matters is the fact that the local Chinese feel the 'presence' of the Army when it helps them. This is called 'presence evangelism'. He continues:

> The Salvation Army has its own way of making its presence felt. For example, in many projects we bring in big cloth bags of flour and they're printed with The Salvation Army shield. The people make bread with the flour, then use the white bags as curtains in their home. So, as you walk down the street you see Salvation Army curtains everywhere! (Larsson 2005)

The Salvation Army curtains do not imply that the Army evangelizes and the local people come to believe in The Salvation Army's values. However, the fact that the Army helps the villagers in the name of God and the 'Spirit', without hiding its Christian identity, is important. 'Presence evangelism' is the most important tool it can use to promote its religious values.

In fact, promoting its shield mark 'brand' is high on the agenda of The Salvation Army worldwide (see Illustration 5.2). By doing so, it seeks to raise its profile, and

spread information on the kinds of services people can obtain from the Army. One of the officers of The Salvation Army in Australia said in an interview:

> This is just like the effect of the yellow sign 'M' on the streets. People immediately know it means MacDonald's. They know exactly what kind of food they can get, and how much it will cost. We are thinking of achieving a similar effect by promoting the shield mark brand. People know that they can come to us when they need help. Also, the shield mark creates opportunities for people to ask what The Salvation Army is doing.[13]

Illustration 5.2: The Salvation Army's Red Shield (left) and Crest (right)

Source: The Salvation Army Australian Eastern Territory (2006).

The officer also said that the Army used its crest to signify many aspects of the beliefs of the Army (see Illustration 5.2). For example, the round figure of the sun 'represents the light and fire of the Holy Spirit'; and 'the cross of Jesus stands at the centre of the crest, and of the Salvationist's faith' (The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory 2006). The crest is meaningful to people *within* the Army, and the shield to people *outside* the Army. The use of the shield mark, therefore, is prevalent, and is not limited to China. The Salvation Army in mainland China often uses the red shield at its project sites (see Photos 5.1 and 5.2). It should be noted that the Army in mainland China does not use the crest at its projects sites, arguably because the crest connotes religious meaning more directly than the red shield does.

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[13] Interview with an officer of Overseas Services, The Salvation Army Australian Eastern Territory, Sydney, 22 February 2006.

Photo 5.2: The Salvation Army's Shield Mark at the Primary School in Fangmaba Village (Taken by author)

Photo 5.3: The Sign of Village Vet with The Salvation Army's Shield Mark (Taken by author)

Note: The top line of the sign says, '*Zhaoyang qu – Jiushijun Zonghe Fazhan Xiangmu*' (Zhaoyang District-The Salvation Army Integrated Development Project). The bottom line of the sign says, '*Fangmaba Cun Shouyi Shi*' (Fangmaba Village Vet Room).

Finally, in this section, it is necessary to consider how The Salvation Army promotes its religious values in different religious contexts. In fact, The Salvation Army as an organization does not have a declared position on this issue. Therefore, in order to understand where the Army might stand on this issue, it is useful to draw on the personal perceptions of individual Army members. The views of individual officers in Hong Kong, Australia and Japan suggest that they all share a so-called liberal view of cross-religious issues. In other words, their attitude towards other religions appears relatively open, and individual members seem to believe that the Army shares its belief in God with people of other religions. 'When one undertakes any activity, one should start from where the people are', said an officer in the Overseas Service section of The Salvation Army in Australia. Referring to a story from the Bible, she said, 'when Saint Paul was on his way to Rome, he did not start talking about Christ. He started talking about the things that the local people believed in'. When people are in need, The Salvation Army tries to help them regardless of their religion. 'Putting theology aside', she said, 'what is important is action in the name of Jesus'.[14]

Such openness can be seen also in the Army's cooperation with people of other religions when undertaking its activity. It seems many of the Army's officers have a positive attitude towards employing and working with people of different religions. This attitude relates directly to the belief of many Army officers that Christianity can share the message of love, and stories of God, with other religions. One officer in Japan remarked:

> There are many religions that sincerely take care of others. If, as written in the Bible, God is Love, then people of other religions also can be messengers of God's love. There are different forms of messengers, but the most important thing is that the messengers can pass the love of God on to people.[15]

This officer emphasized that denial would not create anything. The starting point of evangelism should be 'to live together with others, accept the way they live, and throw oneself into the setting, while constantly practising the love of God'. In this sense, Christianity is not superior to other religions according to the Army's understanding.

On the other hand, the Army *does* believe in the importance of evangelism. Working with people of other religions, according to another officer in Hong Kong, creates an important opportunity for Salvationists to demonstrate the love of God; people of other religions, or of no particular religion, can come to know this love

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[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Phone interview with an officer of The Salvation Army Japan, 16 January 2006.

through the attitudes of the Salvationists. In other words, the Army aims at *voluntary* conversion to Christianity by letting people see the very driving force by which the Salvationists offer their kindness—the love of Jesus Christ'. Therefore, from the Army's point of view, working with people of other religions could lead to 'multiplying the number of Christians'.[16]

Reformulation of Identity in Mainland China

In mainland China, The Salvation Army enjoys a very peaceful relationship with the Chinese government. It maintains a close relationship with the Civil Affairs Bureau, as well as with the Central Religious Affairs Bureau. According to the Officer Commanding The Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, some senior Chinese government officials have affirmed that The Salvation Army is a law-abiding church organization working in China on development projects, and that the government cannot find any fault with the Army at all.[17] Such affirmation, which amounts to a kind of 'ethical clearance' by government officials, is vital to the Army's security in mainland China. In this context, its emphasis on evangelism has to be reformulated to enable it to maintain its peaceful relationship with the government. The question, of course, is how and to what extent does the Army do so?

On the mainland today, The Salvation Army does not evangelize in the sense it did in the Republican period. In fact, today the Army's project officers in mainland China are very cautious about their Christian values. Some officers still wear their Army uniform when engaged on projects, but otherwise, their activities appear little different from those of secular organizations. Secularization is a very prominent feature of the reformulated values underpinning the Army's activities in China.

Funding and Personnel Relations

The secular characteristic of the Army's activities in China is not only a consequence of the need to conform to Chinese regulations but also a result of conditionality tied to funding. Army projects in China receive funds from two main sources. The first and more significant of the two main sources is overseas governments and NGOs such as AusAID, NORAD (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) and the Tear

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[16] Interview with the Officer Commanding The Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, Hong Kong, 16 December 2005.

[17] *Ibid.*

Fund.[18] Financial support for projects in China is often indirect. For example, funding from AusAID goes first to The Salvation Army in Australia, before it is redirected through its Hong Kong headquarters to projects in China.[19] When government aid agencies fund projects, such funding is usually tied to secular use. For example, AusAID requires all the NGOs to distinguish development from evangelization, and to limit use of its funds to development.[20] Despite this condition, during an interview with a Salvation Army official in Australia, the official indicated that the Army did not have a problem with government funding, and generally accepted it. Interestingly, tying funds to secular use does not really matter to the Army, as 'The Salvation Army is big enough to work at the margins of such government demands'.[21]

'Fund matching' is the second source of funding for projects. This occurs when Chinese local governments provide up to half of the overall project funding. On average, the Army seeks between one fourth and one third of a project budget from local governments, in particular, from the poverty alleviation office (*fupin ban* 扶贫办) of each local government.[22] The Army's aim is to involve local governments in projects, with the expectation that, by doing so, local governments and people develop a greater sense of ownership of, and therefore interest in, the Army's projects.[23] Chinese local governments would dare not invest in religious activity. Therefore, projects in China are determined, by both Western and Chinese governments, to be secular. In short, from the point of view of financing, the Army has to reformulate its overt evangelical Christian values to meet the demands of the Chinese central government—leading to the almost complete secularization of those values in order to gain approval to carry out its projects.

On the other hand, the values of The Army's staff members working in mainland China remain Christian to some extent.[24] There are in two project offices some eight

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18 Written communication with Liason Officer,China Development Department, The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command, 16 December 2005.

19 In relation to the provision of government funding to NGOs, it should be noted that even though NGOs operate at a global or transnational level, some Western government aid agencies (for example AusAID) still provide funding on a national level, and it is difficult for NGOs based in other countries to receive funding from other western government aid agencies. This could be interpreted as their aim to foster their own 'national interests' through overseas aid.

20 Interview with Manager of NGO Program, Community Programs Section, AusAID, Canberra, 18 January 2006.

21 Interview with an officer of Overseas Services, The Salvation Army Australian Eastern Territory, in Sydney, 22 February 2006.

22 Interview with the Officer Commanding The Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, in Hong Kong, 16 December 2005.

23 *Ibid.*

24 It is important to identify a distinction between working for The Salvation Army and being a part of The Salvation Army. Chinese people may *work for* The Salvation Army as secular employees throughout their entire career and need never become religious members. However, this differs from

project officers who implement development projects in China, and on each project site, local government officials who work for The Salvation Army. These people fall into three categories. The first includes employees in Hong Kong. They are all Christian, being either 'officers' or 'soldiers' of The Salvation Army in Hong Kong. They work as senior officers, and receive relatively higher salaries than locally employed officers. Some of the Hong Kong officers wear the Army uniform when engaged in their projects; as discussed earlier, the wearing of the uniforms creates at least some opportunity for locals to ask about Christianity. The second category includes local employees in mainland China. These are appointed as assistant project officers. Most of them, at least at the time their employment starts, are non-Christian. The third category includes local government officials, who actually work on Army projects at particular project sites from day to day. Irrespective of whether they work specifically and exclusively on a Salvation Army project or do so as merely one part of their job in local government, they receive salaries from the relevant local government. An apparent unequal relationship between two groups emerges from an analysis of this situation. One group is made up of Hong Kong Christians in higher positions and with higher salaries. The other group is made up of mainland Chinese non-Christians in lower positions, and with lower salaries.

To put Christian workers in higher positions is not necessarily a deliberate policy of The Salvation Army. Rather, this distinction derives from China's social circumstances. First of all, in terms of the difference in the amount of salary, the cost of living on the mainland differs markedly from that of living in Hong Kong, and therefore salary difference based on place of employment is not necessarily derived from any intention to discriminate unfavourably. Secondly, NGOs generally are relatively new to mainland China, and they lack human resources with adequate training in development work. In addition, regardless of the fact that working for international NGOs pre-supposes high-level skill-sets and a high pre-requisite level of education, officials of NGOs enjoy lower status than officials of the government and a less secure welfare system than that provided for employees holding down government jobs. This is one reason many of NGOs employ relatively young people. Thus, Hong Kong employees with a higher education and greater knowledge of community development end up obtaining higher positions.

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the relationship enjoyed by non-mainland Chinese who may join as religious soldiers undertaking an oath to be a soldier for life.

However, over time, many of the local employees who started working for The Salvation Army as secular employees have gradually become Christians. According to the Officer Commanding The Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, the Army does not provide them with a religious education; as a result of their interaction with senior Christian employees or with visiting officers of The Salvation Army, however, many of them have adapted to Christian values.[25] This personnel dimension provides another picture of the extent to which the Army's values are reformulated in the context of project activity in China.

Design of the Community Development Project

When the Army designs a community development project, to what extent does it reformulate its values? The Salvation Army conducted an integrated development project in Fangmaba Administrative Village in Panhe Township, in Zhaoyang District, in Zhaotong City (昭通市昭阳区盘和乡放马坝行政村) from 2000 to 2003. Zhaotong City is approximately 300 km north-east of Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province. Fangmaba Administrative Village, where the Army undertook the project, is less than 100 km northeast of Zhaotong City. This is very close to the area where Samuel Pollard stayed and evangelized the Miao at the beginning of the twentieth century, as discussed in chapter three.

When a senior program officer of the Army visited Zhaotong in 1999 to conduct a pre-project needs analysis, the area was located in one of the eighteen poorest districts (identified at the national level) (Yunnan Sheng Zhaotong Shi Nianjian Bianji Weiyuanhui 2001).[26] In the community, he found that villagers were suffering from a serious lack of food. One reason for this was a high death rate among their pigs, caused by a plague. Another reason was a high level of disease among community members, resulting from toxins in one of the food staples, potatoes. The area was not suitable for rice growing, and potatoes and corn were the staple foods. Having identified these problems, an integrated development project was designed to address them.

The project had seven major components, including cultivation, animal husbandry, animal pens, training, a school/training centre, health, and a satellite television receiver,

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[25] Interview with the Officer Commanding The Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, in Hong Kong, 16 December 2005.

[26] In 1995, there were 122 so-called 'poor townships' (out of 173 townships), and 1004 so-called 'poor administrative villages' (out of 1221 villages). Out of an agricultural population of 4,160,400, there were some 1,620,000 people who did not have enough food and clothing, including 302,000 people in extreme poverty, lacking basic survival resources (Yunnan Sheng Zhaotong Shi Nianjian Bianji Weiyuanhui 2001).

(see Table 5.1). The project was of considerable financial scope: 1,520,400 RMB (approximately US$190,050) in total. Of this, The Salvation Army contributed 1,108,400 RMB, and the local district government contributed 412,000 RMB (including the cost of the building of a primary school for 200,000 RMB).[27]

Table 5.1: The Integrated Development Projects conducted by The Salvation Army in Fangmaba Administrative Village, Panhe Township, Zhaoyang District, Zhaotong City, Yunnan Province

Component	Activity
Cultivation	- To promote the planting of virus-free potatoes - To set up a community revolving fund for cultivation
Animal Husbandry	- To deliver an epidemic prevention service to the animals (vaccinations for pigs and cattle) - To set up a community revolving fund for pig husbandry
Animal Pen	- To construct or rebuild animal pens
Training	- To provide the local villagers with training in agriculture, animal husbandry, health care and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted by the United Nations) to the local villagers
School/Training Centre	- To rebuild the School/Training Center - To build a Teaching Site at Xingfa Natural Village
Health	- To deliver medical services to the local villagers - To deliver medical services to domestic animals - To equip the health clinic with basic equipment and medicine - To set up a community revolving fund for medicine
Satellite Television Receiver	- To install a satellite TV and phone (in the Fangmaba Primary School)

Source: The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command (2002, 2003).

The Army dealt with the material and educational aspects at the same time. This combination is important, because the material aspects served short-term development aims, while the educational aspects served long-term development aims. For poor villagers, the priority is everyday life and improving their economic conditions, rather than receiving an education. However, combining the two aspects together made the training more effective, and more convenient, for the villagers. More specifically, The Salvation Army designed the project in such a way that villagers were able to receive animal husbandry training, health training and even training in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the same time. This was convenient for the villagers because they had to walk for hours to get to the village centre. In addition, the health training in particular was aimed at women, who are socially marginalized in this particular village.

Who undertook the project *in practice*? Even though the Army is a Christian organization, it was the chief local coordinator of the project who implemented the project. The coordinator was actually a local government official in the poverty

[27] This figure comes from the project's budget forecast, but post-project actual expenditure turns out to have been a similar figure. Interview with Liason Officer, China Development Department, The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command, in Hong Kong, 17 December 2005.

alleviation office in Zhaoyang District; of course, as a communist member, he is an atheist. Also, of the many officers of The Salvation Army who went to Zhaoyang from time to time, few were Christian. As explained earlier, senior staff members despatched from Hong Kong were Christian, but they usually worked in Beijing, and rarely went to Zhaoyang. When they did go to a project site, they were able to talk about Christianity if they were asked to by the villagers, but this was quite rare.[28]

The Salvation Army took a so-called 'participatory' approach to its project. According to a Salvation Army staff member in Kunming, the role of The Salvation Army in the process of acquiring knowledge of 'local needs' was merely to facilitate the discussion of the villagers.[29]

The reformulation of The Salvation Army's values in China is significant. Apart from the conversion of local personnel to Christianity, project financial arrangements and the design of projects both reveal that the Army secularizes its work to a high degree. The section that follows will discuss the way ethnic communities responded to the Army project, and revisit the issue of 'presence evangelism' discussed earlier. Having seen in this section that the Army significantly reformulates its values on the mainland, it is essential to examine how ethnic communities have actually responded to the religious expression of the Army—to 'presence evangelism'. The next section will begin with a discussion of how the Army perceived 'ethnic community' in the course of its project.

Local Interactions

Multiple Communities

When explaining local interaction between The Salvation Army and ethnic communities in the Fangmaba village, it is first necessary to identify which 'ethnic communities' are under examination. The aims of this section are first, to discuss how the Army understood 'community' in implementing its project, and second, to explore other overlapping communities existing at the project site, based on the understanding of

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[28] One of the project officers, who works in different projects for the Army, revealed that because of The Salvation Army uniform, and its unusual name as 'The Army of World Salvation (*Jiu Shi Jün*)', villagers know that it is a Christian organization. In the course of informal conversations between the Army officer and villagers, the officer has been asked what Christianity means, and who Jesus is. He has stated that this is no problem from the government's perspective, because this is a friendship and no more than a casual conversation, and does not imply evangelizing.

[29] Interview with Acting Regional Co-ordinator, Southwest Regional Project Office, The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command, in Kunming, 19 November 2004.

'community' discussed in Chapter One of this thesis. Recalling the discussion in Chapter One, community is understood as 'a process of boundary making, affected by interaction with "outsiders" ' (see Chapter One: 36). I have argued that what constitutes the social boundary of a 'community' is identity, which can be observed by means of the examples of social hierarchy and social practice. According to this understanding, at least three overlapping communities existed in the Fangmaba village.

The Salvation Army focused on the entire Fangmaba village as a single community. This community has a population of about 2,400. This is a politically constructed 'community' rather than naturally generated 'community', established by the Provisional Organic Law of Villagers' Committees (*Cunmin Weiyuanhui Zuzhi Fa (Shixing)* 村民委员会组织法（试行）) adopted by the 23rd Session of the Sixth National People's Congress on 24 November 1987.[30] The Fangmaba Administrative Village community is organized by its villagers' committee, the members of which have been directly elected by the villagers since 2001.[31] The villagers' committee manages public affairs at the village level.

The scale of an administrative village varies from about a thousand households to only several households, and the importance of the villagers' committee in the minds of the villagers also varies depending on the scale of the village, according to one of my interviewees.[32] In a large scale administrative village such as Fangmaba, which contains a number of natural villages within its boundary, the villagers' committee and the village head are relatively remote from the day-to-day activities of many of the villagers. As one Salvation Army local project coordinator revealed, any sense of community identity in this administrative village is weak: put differently, community members do not feel that they belong to this administrative village on a day-to-day basis. One reason for this is that the administrative village is widely dispersed geographically. It contains seventeen natural villages, and it takes many hours for community members residing in the south of the administrative village to travel to the north of it. This means that there is no regular daily contact among the more remote community members within the administrative village. Another reason for this weak sense of community identity is that the villagers' committee does not have a solid financial foundation. This

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30 Although the law was established in 1987, it was finally codified by the Ninth National People's Congress Standing Committee in 1998.

31 Interview with Fangmaba Administrative Village Head, in Zhaotong, 27 November 2004.

32 Interview with Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, Kunming, 11 November 2003.

results in low quality village management.[33] The villagers' committee does not receive funds from the government for administrative costs, even though it advertises and implements government policy at the village level. Until the 1980s, the village had a 'production team' (*sheng chan dui* 生産隊) that provided the village with a collective economic income, which became the financial foundation of the village. In contrast, in the current villager committee system, the village has a weaker financial foundation. It is difficult for the villagers as community members to come up with ideas about their 'community' without such a financial foundation; rather, their focus is on how individual expectations would be realized.[34] In other words, community identity in this politically constructed community is fragile. Nevertheless, the Army focused on this politically-constructed community when it implemented its project.

My investigation of Fangmaba village revealed that the villagers identify themselves more strongly with communities within Fangmaba than with the politically constructed administrative village. There are in fact seventeen natural villages within the overall administrative structure of the Fangmaba village, and each natural village can be understood as a community at the natural village level. All seventeen natural villages consist of about forty close-knit households, even though the distance from natural village to natural village can be great. Each of these seventeen villages is an important foundation in the everyday life of its forty or so households. The Salvation Army did not acknowledge these individual natural villages as distinct. In an interview with one of the staff members of The Salvation Army, I asked whether there existed any differences in the 'local needs' of these seventeen natural villages. He argued, 'local topographical conditions are very similar, and therefore, the main problems these villages face are about the same across all the natural villages. The difference is very subtle'.[35] This led to 'local needs' being assessed at the administrative village community level. However, this does not mean that the natural village communities were completely ignored because in reality, the natural village heads played an important role in the Army's project, particularly the role of selecting project participants from among the villagers, as will be discussed later.[36]

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33 Interview with Local Project Coordinator of The Salvation Army (Official of Poverty Alleviation Office of Zhaoyang District Government), in Zhaotong, 26 November 2004.

34 *Ibid.*

35 *Ibid.*

36 Even though the natural villages are the community to which villagers feel belonged to, it is difficult to depend on the natural village heads. This is partly because the salary of administrative village head (*zhuren* 主任) was 220 *yuan* per month, and that of natural village head (*zuzhang*组长) was twenty yuan per month, but according to the village head, such salaries were not enough particularly when

Another kind of community exists in the Fangmaba village. This community is based on religious and ethnic identity. One such community is made up of Miao Christians. Another is made up of Han atheists. In Fangmaba village, approximately thirty per cent of the population is Miao. The remaining seventy per cent is Han. Today, in this village, the Miao still have a different identity from that of the Han. By way of an example that illustrates the difference in the minds of the villagers, a Miao woman I interviewed in Fangmaba village complained quite specifically that the Han had stolen Miao crops.[37] That this woman described the alleged theft in this way, rather than more neutrally as in 'someone in this village stole someone's crops', illustrates the belief that there are distinct ethnic identities in this village.

Christianity is an important marker of the social boundary between Miao and Han. The Miao Christians in this village have a strong sense of their own community. In fact, they gather very frequently for religious activity such as Bible study, according to one interviewee, up to three times a week. Furthermore, the Christian gatherings are conducted mainly in the Miao language. Although some educated Miao can speak Mandarin, most speak only the indigenous Miao language by choice.[38] It seems that this sort of religious gathering nurtures a sense of community and plays an important part in the everyday life of the Miao.

I interviewed a Miao villager in his thirties, and he confirmed his view that Christianity is an important community boundary marker among Miao villagers. I asked him about the needs of his village, and his answer was, 'I cannot think of anything (in relation to village needs). I merely think about myself'. I then asked about the Christian gatherings in this village. Had he ever discussed the needs of the Christians in the village? Without hesitation he replied that he had: 'We discussed the importance of caring; especially, visiting sick Christian friends, and providing them with spiritual and economic help. For example, a seventy year old man did not have coals to heat up his house, so we sent coals to him' (just like in the Chinese proverb, 'sending coals to a poor man' (*xue zhong tan song* 雪中炭送). This interview suggests that to the Miao, a sense of 'community' based on Christianity means more than any sense of community based on the administrative village.

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they had meetings three to four times a month. Interview with Fangmaba Administrative Village Head, in Zhaotong, 27 November 2004.

37 Interview with a villager of Fangmaba Village, in Zhaotong, 25 November 2005.

38 For example, one of my Miao interviewees stated she had had some difficulty understanding the training provided by The Salvation Army because the training was conducted in Mandarin.

In addition to religion and language, the identity of the Miao Christians vis-à-vis that of the Han is also based on unique Miao characteristics. Such characteristics—for example, in clothing, marriage customs and economic conditions—have been constructed also over a lengthy period of history. Chapter Three of this thesis described the lower status and poorer economic conditions of the Miao in relation to those of the Han and the Nosu (today's Yi) in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Even though the Communist government publicly espouses the equality of the various nationalities, the relatively lower status and poorer economic conditions of the Miao persist.[39] This is closely related to the language difference, which limits their opportunities for useful interaction with nearby towns for the purpose of engaging in commercial activity, and therefore limits opportunities to work among the Han.

Ironically, however, the Army seemed unaware of the religious community of this village. In response to a question about just what the religion of this community was, the Army staff member said, 'that is a good question. The Miao is an ethnic group that has a Christian background'.[40] He did not specifically answer my question on the religion of the Miao in this village. None of their project proposals mentioned the religious characteristics of the Miao either. He added, 'Christians are usually found among the older generation. The younger generation does not believe in Christianity'.[41] Even though the fact that generational change had occurred was apparent, considering that the Miao have difficulty understanding Mandarin, and that they are relatively poor, it would have been meaningful to them had The Salvation Army focused on or at least examined the effect of using their Christian community in implementing its project. Nonetheless, and ironically, the local Christian community was largely ignored by this international Christian NGO.

Making use of a religious community in the execution of some project or other is not necessarily unusual in China. To begin with, the Communist Party has utilized local religious communities in the process of establishing a united front since the Party fought the Guomindang in the 1940s. In the context of civil society, too, more and more NGOs attempt to use local religious networks in undertaking projects. This is

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39 Interview with Local Project Coordinator of The Salvation Army (Official of Poverty Alleviation Office of Zhaoyang District Government), in Zhaotong, 26 November 2004.

40 Interview with Acting Regional Co-ordinator, Southwest Regional Project Office, The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command, in Kunming, 19 November 2004.

41 I could not do any further research on the current situation on Christian beliefs of younger Miao, because simply asking questions about religion in general caused The Salvation Army officers and local government officials getting nervous about a foreigner asking religious questions of local Christians.

particularly so in Yunnan. For example, the Yunnan Family Planning Association, one of China's government-organized NGOs (GONGOs), actively uses Muslim leaders to carry out HIV/AIDS education and encourages the use of condoms (Yunnan Family Planning Association 2003). By way of another example, the Amity Foundation, a domestic Christian NGO, also undertakes church-based projects and uses local religious networks to implement their projects more effectively.[42]

In answer to a question about why the Army did not deal with the local Christian community in Fangmaba village, a staff member of the Army highlighted the problem of the Army's identity as an *international* Christian organization. He explained that the Amity Foundation, for example, is a domestic organization, backed by the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. Because Amity is a domestic NGO with political support, it is able to make use of local religious communities in implementing its projects. In contrast, the Army staff member continued, in The Salvation Army's case, being that of an *international* Christian NGO, the Army would have experienced a problem had it undertaken a project with reference to religion or by drawing on religious networks. The Chinese government is very sensitive about international Christian organizations dealing with local religious communities. It was also apparent from the interview that The Salvation Army had achieved a good level of cooperation with district and township governments, and the villagers' committee. 'As long as they were able to mobilize people, we didn't need to cooperate with churches'.[43]

In addition, a local coordinator, who works for the Army project, and who is also an official of the district government, confirmed that it is because The Salvation Army is an international NGO that it cannot cooperate with local religious communities. I asked him whether cooperating with the local churches would be possible if the organization was a domestic one. His answer was revealing:

> There would be no problem if the NGO was a domestic one, but we would have to cooperate with the government sectors. Specifically, we would have to approach the religious bureau of the district government, and then approach the churches, and finally the Christian people.

This point, on the difference between China's domestic religious organizations and international organizations, refutes conventional understanding of China's civil society. Key studies on transnational civil society in China implicitly assume that domestic NGOs have less capacity to place a religious emphasis on their activity than do

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[42] Amity Foundation is a domestic NGO, because it has its Headquarter in Nanjing.

[43] Interview with Acting Regional Co-ordinator, Southwest Regional Project Office, The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command, in Kunming, 19 November 2004.

international NGOs. Considering the Chinese government's strong suspicion of international NGOs, and restriction of their activity, however, such an assumption is incorrect. One of China's domestic religious NGOs, the Amity Foundation, for example, has greater capacity to engage with local religious communities, and to place a much stronger Christian emphasis on it dealings with them than do international Christian organizations.

In sum, The Salvation Army did not focus on the Miao Christian community for the following three reasons. The first is the Army's dependence on the role of the villagers' committee, in particular the role of the administrative village head. This is the community politically constructed by the Chinese government, and cooperating with it was a way for the Army to maintain a stable relationship with the local government. The second reason is the Army's negligence of the importance of the religious community. Ironically, the Christianity of the Miao was considered irrelevant to a project conducted by a Christian organization. The third reason is the fact that the Army's identity as an international Christian NGO seriously hindered it from recognizing the Miao religious community. Therefore, the Army preferred the administrative village community while downplaying natural village communities and the Miao Christian community. An important question is, then, to what extent did the Army's preference for and downplaying of these communities affect the way the community members responded to the Army's project and its relevant values? The next section will explore the local responses to the Army's training project and to presence evangelism.

Local Response to the Project: Training as 'Local Needs'

The Army undertook the training of community members in such issues as agriculture, animal husbandry, health care and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted by the United Nations). As discussed earlier, according to the Army's senior project officer in Kunming, all project components were determined based on 'local needs'. It is important, however, to examine precisely how such needs were identified by the Army, in order to appreciate the way the Army implemented its project.

The Army's local coordinator was in charge of actually implementing the project. In the course of one interview, he revealed that there was a process by which community members 'discovered' their needs. During the first needs analysis conducted by the Army, community members did not make the connection with the idea of

training as a 'local need'. According to the local coordinator, when he asked what the villagers needed, they replied, 'Money!' Money is not what The Salvation Army was happy to give, because of its mere short-term impact. When the money is used up, the impact of the project also ends. Ideally, the positive impact of the project should persist in the community for a long time after the project's end.

The local coordinator stated that close communication between the Army's staff members (among whom he numbered himself) and community members was essential during the needs analysis phase of the project.[44] The local coordinator began his contact with the villagers by setting a relaxed scene, identifying with them by saying that he was not only the Army's local coordinator and a government official but also a villager from a nearby village. This gave the villagers a friendly impression of him. Then he began to ask questions to research the economic conditions and problems of the villagers. He emphasized that how the questions were formed was important to obtaining relevant answers from the villagers. For example, he did not ask, 'what is the average annual income per capita of this village?' The questions had to be asked 'at the level of the villagers' thinking'. Examples of such questions include, 'how much do you eat everyday?' 'What did the horses carry to town?' 'How many bags of corns can one horse carry?' 'How many times did you go to town with the horse?'

After researching the economic conditions, the coordinator asked the villagers whether their family members were well. When villagers said they were not, he asked what kind of sickness afflicted them. When the villagers described some of the symptoms, he would say, 'Ok, s/he will feel alright when s/he gets this injection' or 'You will need some knowledge about this in order to prevent the sickness before it happens'. Then, he asked questions such as 'What do you think about having training to acquire the knowledge to avoid such sickness?' In this way, the villagers gradually came to appreciate the need for health training, and finally expressed a desire to receive health training. The project coordinator admitted that he was 'guiding their needs' (*yindao tamen de xuqiu* 引导他们的需求).

This begs the question of just who defines local 'need', and how such 'need' is supposed to be identified in community development. Development agencies often argue the importance of 'needs assessment', but in this project the 'needs' of the villagers were defined by what The Salvation Army determined to be important. The assumption underpinning this 'guiding of needs' is that the villagers were unable to

discern their own 'real needs'. It can be argued that 'guiding needs' is a sign of an asymmetrical understanding of the relationship between the international religious agency and ethnic communities; that is, the method of guiding the villagers to identify needs is arguably consistent with the idea underpinning the civilizing mission. While the Army proclaimed its project used a participatory approach to identify local needs, it had particular ideas about the project from an early stage. In this case, 'participation' amounted to the Army's 'consultation' with ethnic community members, borrowing Cornwall's words: 'consultation' refers to the fact that local opinions were sought, 'but outsiders analysed and decided on a course of action' (1996: 95).

Does the fact that the Army guided the identification of local needs mean that the Army was on a 'civilizing mission'? Put differently, do local 'needs' have to be identified by local ethnic community members exclusively in order to avoid the accusation that an NGO is on a 'civilizing mission'? I do not believe that this is necessarily the case. At this point, it is fundamentally important to learn what the local community members' perceptions of the training project were. The following section argues that the way ethnic community members perceived the project was not based on the way the needs were identified, but on the way the training was conducted.

Perceptions of Project Participants

My interviews with the villagers who were participants in the training revealed the complex nature of their perceptions. At one level, it seems that the community members participated in the training session *involuntarily*. One villager I interviewed, for example, said that he participated in the training session, 'because the village head told me to do so'. As explained below, the participants were actually selected by natural village heads in the traditional top-down manner.

At another level, however, it seems that the participants appreciated the importance of the training. The villager quoted above told me that, in spite of his earlier involuntary attitude to participation, he acknowledged that the training was 'just what we [villagers] needed' and that it was 'very important'. Another villager I interviewed also revealed that the training was effective. Even though the training was conducted a couple of years before my visit to the village, this second villager still remembered what she had learnt during the training. To my question of whether her life-style has changed as a result of her participating in the Army's health training session, she said, 'before

[44] Interview with Local Project Coordinator of The Salvation Army (Official of Poverty Alleviation

the training, I was using pesticide around the house, and wondering why my chickens were dying one after another. As a result of the training, I stopped buying and using pesticide and the chickens stopped dying. They even began to produce eggs again'.

The key to such an appreciation of the importance of the training was the way the training was conducted. It was conducted using what the local coordinator called 'a participatory approach', 'in a discussion style'. This was a new style of 'training' from the villagers' point of view, because in the past 'training' meant the delivery of information by unidirectional lecturing.[45] According to the local coordinator, the two-way discussion style of training, together with the use of various kinds of learning tools, led not only to a rise in knowledge of the project contents among the participants, but also a rise in the confidence of women participants and a willingness to participate in the training. In the past, women in this village could not speak their own name. 'When I asked their names, they said their fathers' or husbands' names. However after experiencing the training in a discussion style and learning to contribute, they gained the confidence to be able to use their own name, and also became more willing to volunteer, and more willing to participate, in training sessions'.[46]

The local coordinator also created a variety of learning tools. One of the learning tools was the 'community hygiene allegretto' (*shequ weisheng kuaiban* 社区卫生快板), a song that sings about hygiene issues with a nice rhythm. This song includes a verse on pesticide! The local coordinator not only managed the training program, but was himself the instructor in health training. He proudly explained every verse of the 'allegretto' to me, with some jokes and funny stories relating to how it was received by the villagers and how they used it to learn about health. His explanation was very easy to understand, and it was clear that he played a very important role in the project. He was a very effective communicator between the Army and the ethnic community members. His in-depth knowledge of issues and problems in area and of the community members themselves was essential to the delivery of training content meaningful to the community members, and suitable for use in their everyday lives. His creativity in developing hygiene songs clearly added to the overall effectiveness of the training project, and it would appear that participants' positive impressions of the training project and their memory of the training content derived in no small measure from his

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Office of Zhaoyang District Government), in Zhaotong, 26 November 2004.

45 Interview with Deputy Head of Poverty Alleviation Office of Zhaoyang District Government, in Zhaotong, 27 November 2004.

46 Interview with Local Project Coordinator of The Salvation Army (Official of Poverty Alleviation Office of Zhaoyang District Government), in Zhaotong, 26 November 2004.

contribution. Even though 'local needs' were actually defined by the Army, the in-depth dialogue between the Army's local coordinator and the ethnic community members led the latter to appreciate the value of the training. This outcome reflects features of the adaptation frame, regardless of the fact that training need was defined primarily by the Army.

In short, the origins of an idea are not crucial to determining whether the subsequent interaction between an international religious agency and an ethnic community reflects features of the conflict frame or the adaptation frame. The most crucial issue is whether there is enough dialogue between an international religious agency and ethnic community members.

Participants and Non-Participants

Although the training participants were happy about the training projects, it is important to note that there were many community members who did *not* participate in them. In total, there were 1,522 participants involved in the training projects, which is equal to about half of the population (2,400). The number of participants in each project were agriculture (358), animal husbandry (859), health (149) and hygiene (156).

Why did some villagers participate while others did not? This question led me to investigate the participant selection process. An interview with the Salvation Army's senior staff members back in Kunming revealed that this project took a participatory approach.[47] Although the interviewee did not discuss the particulars of the selection process, the term 'participatory approach' led me to expect that the Army was attempting to encourage community members to participate in the training voluntarily.

Contrary to expectation, however, my interview with the local coordinator revealed that selection was made in the traditional top-down manner. The Army's local coordinator and the Fangmaba administrative village head appointed each of the seventeen natural village heads at this project site to select participants. The natural village heads had responsibility for advertising the training among the villagers,[48] but it seems that they did not advertise the importance of the training sessions to the entire population of the village in such a way as to encourage community members to participate in training sessions voluntarily.

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47 Interview with Acting Regional Co-ordinator, Southwest Regional Project Office, The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command, in Kunming, 19 November 2004.

48 Interview with Local Project Coordinator of The Salvation Army (Official of Poverty Alleviation Office of Zhaoyang District Government), in Zhaotong, 26 November 2004, and interview with Fangmaba Administrative Village Head, in Zhaotong, 27 November 2004.

Instead, according to the local coordinator, the natural village heads tended to select villagers with high *suzhi* (素质): that is, relatively well-educated, wealthy and prestigious villagers, rather than the 'poorest of the poor'.[49] The villagers with high *suzhi* were chosen because, according to the local coordinator, 'their knowledge of health, and skill in cultivation and animal husbandry could be called on later within the natural village by the other villagers'.[50] In other words, those 'high quality' villagers could act as intermediaries between The Salvation Army and other villagers. The villagers assessed as being of 'high quality' included both Han and Miao, because not that *all* the Christian Miao were excluded from the project. For example, more than twenty percent of the Miao population participated in the farming technique training.

This selection criterion makes sense from two points of view: those of project sustainability and of project effectiveness. However, an unfortunate consequence of top-down selection was that it led to *involuntary* participation by some villagers, and limited the opportunity for other villagers to participate.

Focussing on pre-existing community identity means paying more attention to the 'downplayed' communities mentioned above. Had The Salvation Army intended to enable all the villagers to participate in this project, and had it intended to advertise this project among all the villagers, it could have utilized other kinds of community to which the villagers felt a stronger sense of belonging. As discussed above, in the minds of the villagers, their natural village communities and their Christian communities carried more weight than their administrative village communities. To mobilize the villagers *not coercively but more voluntarily*, the use of such communities would have been essential. However, participation in these training courses was involuntary and not all the villagers knew about the training. The Army's lack of emphasis on voluntary participation is closely related to the fact that the Army concentrated on cooperating with and preferring a politically-constructed community based on the administrative village, and downplaying other kinds of community, particularly the Miao Christian community. If The Salvation Army had been able to focus more on these other communities, and cooperate with them in advertising the importance of their training, members of these communities might have voluntarily participated in the training.. This point is particularly important given the fact that the Miao Christian community is generally poorer than the Han, and hence arguably stood to gain more from the training

[49] 'Suzhi' is a discourse that has appeared in China since the 1990s. See Jacka (2005).

[50] Interview with Local Project Coordinator of The Salvation Army (Official of Poverty Alleviation Office of Zhaoyang District Government) in Zhaotong, 26 November 2004.

effort than other communities; the decision to downplay their participation seems at odds with the mission's goals of helping the poorest.

The fact that the Miao Christian community members did not participate in the training does not point to features of either the conflict frame or the adaptation frame. There was simply no interaction between the Army and the non-participants to assess. Nevertheless, it is important to note that some community members *did not interact* because the international religious agency downplayed a particular community. This point will be incorporated when reconsidering the analytical framework in the conclusion to this thesis.

Local Reaction to Religious Values: Presence Evangelism

How did community members respond to the religious values of this project? Although religious values were not explicitly presented in this particular project, as indicated earlier, the fact that the Army leaves its shield mark on the many buildings it constructs, such as animal pens, houses, the clinic, and the primary school is, from General Larsson's point of view, an act of 'preaching the gospel'. Ethnic community members knew that an organization called *Jiu Shi Jün* came and helped the village. However, it is questionable as to how many community members knew *why* the Army came to help them.

The Army's internal evaluation report on its integrated development program is suggestive of the way the villagers remember the Army, even though the program was conducted in a different village. The villagers do not particularly remember the Army in association with Christianity. In response to a question on the goals of The Salvation Army, villagers answered as follows:

> We don't know what it (The Salvation Army) is but it is helping the poor like us (Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA)).
>
> The Salvation Army is an organisation that helps poor areas. It saves people from the fire [difficulties] (Hospital Worker).
>
> The Salvation Army is an organisation that serves needy people, to take care of their health problems (TBA).
>
> The Salvation Army is a charitable organisation with a loving heart and that works with the needy, taking care of their health problems (TBA).
>
> The Salvation Army is like the Red Cross, they want to help minority groups (Hospital Worker).

> Because of The Salvation Army, we have got knowledge, and it is [we] who should thank you. I remember from my training (with The Salvation Army), (the goal of the Army) is 'heart to God and hand to man' (TBA).

These quotes show that the villagers did not consciously identify the Army as a Christian evangelical organization. Only the final quote above shows that a villager knew that the Army proclaimed its identity as 'heart to God and hand to man' (which is also written on all Salvation Army officer business cards), but there is no indication that the villagers thought that the Army 'preaches the gospel' as General Larsson claims. This is also the case among the Christian Miao. My interview with Christian Miao villagers indicated that they did not identify the Army particularly as 'an organization that has the same religion as ours'. The villagers' general understanding of the Army was that its aim is to help people. This leads to the raising of the profile of The Salvation Army in China, which is an important part of 'presence evangelism'.[51]

Otherwise, several Army officers on this project revealed that they did their best to avoid discussing any underlying Christian aspects with government officials and villagers. In fact, when I talked to Army officers about the purpose of my research, I sensed considerable nervousness and tension among some of the project's officers.[52] Although The Salvation Army also conducts a church-based HIV/AIDS prevention project in Kunming City, it is extremely difficult to conduct any activity that overtly relates to religion in the context of rural development because of a greater sensitivity there to religion and to foreigners in general. 'It is not possible to conduct a church-based project in rural areas, because of our identity as an international Christian organization', said a senior officer of the Army.[53]

How can one assess the local response to the Army's religious values based on the three frames of interaction? The ethnic community members, including both the Christian Miao and the non-Christian Han, did not identify the Army's contribution as having anything to do with a biblical message, but they did understand that the Army came to their village to help them. In short, the local response to the Army's value of 'Heart to God, Hand to Man' was of two kinds. First, ethnic communities barely

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51 Interview with the Officer Commanding The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command, in Hong Kong, 16 December 2005.

52 The reason they seemed nervous about my raising the issue of the Christianity of The Salvation Army is that they are already worried about their international Christian identity, and it is possible that foreign researchers travelling to remote areas to investigate religious issues may give the impression that The Salvation Army aids such foreign researchers and helps them to evangelize the local people.

53 Interview with Acting Regional Co-ordinator, Southwest Regional Project Office, The Salvation Army Hong Kong and Macau Command, in Kunming, 19 November 2004.

recognized the 'Heart to God' dimension of Army activity, and this sort of response does not reflect features of any of the three frames. However, they did appreciate the 'Hand to Man' dimension of the Army's activity. Such appreciation is in a sense equivalent to a 'consensus' between the Army and the ethnic communities on the kind of activity that the Army was conducting in the village, and as such reflects features of the adaptation frame.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the values of The Salvation Army in historical and contemporary contexts and has emphasized the importance of evangelism and the tackling of social injustice. In the Chinese context today, while direct evangelism has been secularized to a significant extent, 'presence evangelism', based on the use of symbolism such as Army shield mark, is an important medium for expressing the Army's religious values. However, in reality, it is difficult for ethnic community members to think of 'presence evangelism' as 'evangelism'. Rather, ethnic community members perceive the Army to be a helper. Even though the Army case study project appeared to be totally secular, and was perceived as secular by government officials and even some staff members of The Salvation Army in mainland China, General Larsson still views such secularization as the Army's way of 'preaching the gospel' in China. This is because The Salvation Army's shield mark retains a symbolic significance despite appearances to the contrary.

There are three other important findings of this chapter that should be underscored in this conclusion. First, even though 'local needs' were actually 'guided' by the Army's local coordinator, ethnic community members' response to the Army's training project reflected features of the adaptation frame. In-depth dialogue with community members and the local knowledge of the Army's local coordinator were key to the interaction between the Army and the ethnic community members, reflecting features of the adaptation frame.

Second, even though the participants were eventually happy about the contents of the training, their participation was involuntary at least at the initial stage. Also, those of 'low quality' did not have the opportunity to participate in the training project. Arguably, this situation could be improved by engaging with communities in which members feel a strong sense of identity; in the case of Fangmaba village, these were the natural village communities and the Christian Miao community. This chapter reveals,

however, that The Salvation Army, as an international religious NGO, had difficulty engaging with a religiously oriented community; rather, it preferred to engage with a politically constructed administrative village community, with which ethnic community members did not feel a strong sense of identity.

Finally, this chapter has suggested that the way the Army expresses its religious values is so subtle that some ethnic community members may not even recognize them as such.

In the next chapter, we will move onto the last case study, that of Oxfam Hong Kong. The similarities and differences between The Salvation Army and Oxfam Hong Kong will provide a more in-depth understanding of the interaction between international religious agencies and ethnic communities.

CHAPTER SIX

A SECULAR USE OF LOCAL RELIGION: OXFAM HONG KONG

Origins, Values and Beliefs

Oxfam Hong Kong, one of twelve independent Oxfams around the world forming a confederation of affiliates known as 'Oxfam International' (hereafter 'Oxfam'), is an NGO that works on issues of development and advocacy (Oxfam International 2004).[1] Oxfam claims to be 'a non-religious organisation that works with poor people whatever their religion or race' (Oxfam Great Britain ND). Since its establishment in 1942, Oxfam has grown gradually larger. It currently operates in more than a hundred countries, and has an annual expenditure of some US$402.33 million (Oxfam International 2004).[2] This is larger than the GDP of some developing countries; for example Timor-Leste has a GDP of some $339 million, and Samoa some $363 million (World Bank 2005).

The organization in fact has Christian roots: it was established by Quakers, formally called the Religious Society of Friends, significant numbers of whom were in Oxfam offices in places such as Great Britain and Australia. This Quaker influence has lessened over the years, and now Quakers form only a small minority in Oxfam. Oxfam's projects and mission statements have been completely secular, since its beginning.[3] This section examines the way Oxfam was established, paying particular attention to the Quakers and the process of secularization.

Oxfam, originally called the 'Oxford Committee for Famine Relief', was set up in 1942 to provide relief to those devastated by famine in Greece as a result of the German occupation of World War II. Its precedent body was the national Committee of Famine Relief, which was set up mainly by George Bell, Bishop of Chichester (Anglican) and Gilbert Murray, Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford University, with the strong support of the Friends' Service Council (FSC), the relief organization of the Quakers (Oxfam Great Britain ND). When attempting to establish its local sub-committees, the

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1 They exist in America, Belgium, Australia, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Spain, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand and Québec. This thesis uses 'Oxfams' in the plural when describing the twelve individual organizations, the confederation of which is described as 'Oxfam International'.

2 This figure does not include Oxfam America totals or management costs, which were not available at the time of going to print.

3 Interview with Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, in Melbourne, 19 December 2005.

national Committee of Famine Relief identified Oxford as one of the potential local areas. The Honorary Secretary of the Committee, Edith M. Pye, was a member of the FSC. Pye contacted the Oxford Preparative Meeting of Quakers, and the Gilletts, a prominent Quaker family, made arrangements for the meeting.[4] This meeting was the beginning of the Oxford Committee of Famine Relief, today's Oxfam. At the end of the war, when most other local committees were wound up, a few continued their work for a short while but eventually ceased to exist (Oxfam Great Britain ND). Only Oxfam survived and expanded overseas.[5]

Oxfam has taken a clearly secular approach since its beginning, and Quakers have not seen the organization as a vehicle for the spreading of their beliefs.[6] This secular character of Oxfam, arguably, goes to the very heart of Quakerism. The origin of Quakerism dates back to the 1650s, when George Fox founded the Society of Friends in England. The Quaker faith centres on Jesus Christ, but many Quakers, particularly in the twentieth century, have been very much liberal Christians in the sense that they do not follow traditional religious practices. They have no set liturgy, creeds, or ordained ministers, and no sacraments. Rather, they focus on 'Inner (or Inward) Light and the direct experience of God's Spirit' (Livingstone 2000: 225).

> [The Quakers] emphasized the primacy of religious experience, treated doctrinal statements as symbolic utterances rather than literal truth, saw the Bible as a product of history rather than eternal truth, stressed a loving rather than a judging God, and emphasized New Testament ethics. Jesus became a supreme ethical exemplar and the Sermon on the Mount a guide for reconstructing the general society (Frost 2000).

The Quakers' liberal understanding of Christianity provides a platform upon which to develop relationships with other religions. In his talk entitled 'Should Quakers Receive the Good Samaritan Into Their Membership', Morgan (2004: 20) answered the question '[y]es, if his or her life is consistent with the action in the parable. And in many cases life is consistent, whether it be the life of Samaritan, Moslem, Buddhist, Confucian or "pagan" animist in Africa'. Furthermore, Gilman (2004: 3) points out 'what many liberal Friends today may feel is a pervasive secularism'. The inclusive

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4 Although there were many Quakers at the meeting, the Anglican Rev. Theodore Richard Milford, Vicar of St. Mary the Virgin (Anglican church, also known as the University Church), eventually chaired the meeting.

5 In spite of the significance of the topic to many influential NGOs whose origins are associated with Quakerism, there is scant literature on the relationship between Quakerism and secularism. The Quakers were involved in founding and supporting other very well-known large-scale NGOs, including Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Shelter and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Care, Christian Aid, the Save the Children Federation, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. For a more comprehensive list of such organizations, see Rickerman (2005).

6 Written Correspondence with Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, 27 March 2006.

attitude of the Quakers towards other religions leads to a secular idea of humanitarianism. Gilman (2004: 4) suggests that 'for many people "universalism," and even Quakerism itself, became equated with a rather arid, humanistic approach to worship and with "walking one's talk" and doing good in the world, but not with listening for inner leadings'. Therefore, one of the features of Quakerism today is its commitment to pacifism and social justice, rather than putting a strong emphasis on religious dogma.

This liberalization of Quakerism occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century; however the earliest Quakers conducted missions based on their evangelical beliefs.[7] Here it is necessary to touch on the issue of Quaker missionaries in China in the Republican period, considering the Quaker origins of Oxfam. The Quaker missions differed from Oxfam mainly in terms of their emphasis on a Christian evangelical ethos and on plans for universities in China (*The Chinese Recorder* 1908: 636). Their work in Western China began in 1886, and, by 1908, twenty-seven missionaries had worked in Sichuan Province (*The Chinese Recorder* 1908: 636). Within Christian circles in China, however, Quaker missionaries were often indistinguishable from other Protestant denominations because they did not have a particular Christian dogma. Unlike the Quaker missionaries of the seventeenth century, they did not believe that Quakerism was the only true Church. Quaker missionaries in China made 'evangelistic and educational efforts' (*The Chinese Recorder* 1934: 668). With regard to the evangelistic effort, Quaker missionaries conducted 'what one of them terms "old fashioned evangelical work," holding meetings, preaching, teaching, distributing literature, forming personal contacts with men and women in the towns and villages' in the Tungchwan and Suining Districts in Sichuan Province (*The Chinese Recorder* 1934: 668). With regard to educational effort, the main work was the establishment of the University of Chengdu (*The Chinese Recorder* 1934: 668). In the 1950s, Quaker missionaries were expelled from China; however, 'some Quaker churches were still functioning, but with Chinese personnel' (Peterson 2002: 3).

The 'mission movement' of Quakerism came to an end at the beginning of the twentieth century, when a liberal understanding of Christianity and its secular expression of Christian ethics attracted the attention of many Quakers. Trueblood explains the end of the Quaker mission movement:

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[7] In describing the earliest Quakers as a 'missionary movement', Trueblood (1966: 247) comments '[t]o ask, when did the Religious Society of Friends adopt a missionary program, is to state the question wrongly. Quakerism was a missionary movement before it was an organized religious society. The Quaker mission is older than the Quaker Church'.

> One reason is the doubt, in some minds, of whether it is right to disturb people of the other world religions by the introduction of Christian ideas. Sometimes this is merely the result of the superficial judgment that one religion is as good as another, but, in other minds, it arises from a more profound understanding of the way in which the Living Christ has, all along, been reaching out to all men, whether Buddhists, Moslems, or whatever. In India some Quakers have rejected wholly the idea of converting Hindus to Christ, and have sought to develop a new expression which is neither Christian nor Hindu. Even those who do not go this far find something of their missionary enthusiasm dampened by *the recognition of obvious value in other religions*. Very few contemporary Quakers believe that a devout non-Christian will be consigned to eternal punishment, simply because he is not a Christian. Another cause of the decline in missionary zeal is the way in which so much of the idealist urge of young Quakers has found *expression in service projects and in new developments* such as that of the Peace Corps (1966: 254; my emphasis).

Trueblood does not explain the theological relationship between 'the recognition of obvious value in other religions', and secularism. There is not enough space in this thesis to explore this relationship further, but recognition by the Quakers of the values of other religions is arguably related to the secularization of Quaker activities. Oxfam is clearly one example of secular 'expression in service projects and in new developments'. Today, secularism is one of the basic values espoused by Oxfam.

The twelve Oxfams basically share their values and beliefs, in accordance with the global strategic plan of Oxfam International (Oxfam International 2001).[8] Those values and beliefs are, for example, a 'rights-based approach to development', 'participation' and 'gender equality'. The following section explores these values and beliefs that Oxfam espouses today in more detail.

Values and Beliefs Outside Mainland China Today

According to its global strategic plan, Oxfam espouses a number of values (Oxfam International 2001). Among its more fundamental beliefs is the importance of a rights-based approach to development. This is the foundation of Oxfam's other values and beliefs, and therefore this section first reviews what Oxfam means by a rights-based approach to development. It then investigates two of the main values and beliefs Oxfam espouses, which are embedded in the China-based project described later. The first is the importance of participation to self-mobilization. The second is gender equality.

A rights-based approach to development is the basis of Oxfam's poverty alleviation activity. Oxfam considers poverty, lack of rights and inequality to be inseparable. Its mission statement claims, 'Oxfams understand that poverty is a state of powerlessness in which people are unable to exercise their basic human rights or control

virtually any aspect of their lives' (Oxfam International 2005). According to Oxfam International's Strategic Plan, five rights form the foundation of their activity:

1. The right to a sustainable livelihood (with the objective of achieving food and income security as well as greater protection of, and control over, the natural resources on which they depend; achieving access to secure paid employment, dignified working conditions, and labour rights; and participating in, and benefiting from, markets);
2. The right to basic social services (with the objective of improving adequate basic health services, clean water, sanitation, public health services, and education for children and adults);
3. The right to life and security (with the objective of reducing the number of people who die, fall sick, or suffer deprivation as a direct result of armed conflict or natural disasters);
4. The right to be heard – social and political citizenship (with the objective of achieving civil and political rights for marginalised people, and capacity building for the empowerment of poor and excluded people); and
5. The right to an identity – gender and diversity (with the objective of enabling women, ethnic and cultural minorities, and other groups oppressed or marginalised because of their identity to enjoy equal rights and status) (Oxfam International 2001; modified by author).

A rights-based approach is 'Oxfam's response to the real causes of poverty', which is, according to Oxfam HK's former China Programme Manager, 'structural'.[9] To understand the real causes of poverty, a rights-based approach 'forces an analysis, which may well change the programme priorities' (Oxfam International 2004).

A rights-based approach is intricately related to the belief of Oxfam in the importance of participation in self-mobilization. The global strategic plan of Oxfam International (2001) states:

> In all our actions our ultimate goal is to enable people to exercise their rights and manage their own lives.
>
> For people to be able to exercise their rights:
>
> a. opportunities must be created so people can *participate* in governing all aspects of their lives, and
> b. they must have the genuine *capacity to organize* and take advantage of those opportunities (Oxfam International 2001; my emphasis).

The 'capacity to organize' is often described as 'self-mobilization' in development literature (Pretty 1995). In order to fully understand Oxfam's belief in the importance of participation in self-mobilization, it is useful to draw on some development literature on participation, in which self-mobilization is identified as the ultimate way to support the local people.

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[8] Interview with Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, in Melbourne, 19 December 2005.

The concept of participation arose from the view that 'development' has to value local people and conditions. Perhaps one of the studies of participation most frequently referred to is that of Robert Chambers (1983, 1994). He initiated the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) in the context of rural development, defining it as 'a family of approaches and methods to enable local people to share, enhance, and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions to plan and to act' (1994: 953). It evolved from the Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA). The most fundamental difference between the two lies in their objectives. As Chambers (1994: 957, 958) mentions, '[a]n RRA is intended for learning by outsiders', enabling 'outsiders to gain information and insight from local people and about local conditions, and to do this in a more cost-effective and timely manner'. In contrast, 'a PRA is intended to enable local people to conduct their own analysis, and often to plan and take action' (Chambers 1994: 958).

Participation discourse has flourished in the development literature, but the definition of participation varies significantly. In understanding the various kinds of participation, discussion of the typology of participation is helpful (Arnstein 1969; Jiggins 1993; Pretty 1995; Cornwall 1996).[10] Table 6.1 shows some representative studies on the typology of participation (Kelly 2001).[11]

The upper part of this table represents a high level of participation. The lower part represents a low level of participation. In Arnstein's (1969: 217) model, for example, the three categories at the top are levels of citizen power with increasing degrees of decision-making clout. *Delegated Power* and *Citizen Control* enable 'have-not citizens (to) obtain the majority of decision-making seats, or full managerial power'. *Partnership* 'enables citizens to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with traditional powerholders'. *Placation, consultation,* and *Informing*, describe levels of 'tokenism' in which

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[9] Interview with a former China Programme Manager and a current Policy Advisor–Gender Equity, in Hong Kong, 16 December 2006.

[10] However, some scholars discuss other criteria to clarify the different kinds of participation. The criteria include; (1) number of people involved (Farrington and Bebbington 1993; Gujit and Shah 1998), (2) role of the people involved (Jiggins 1993: Cornwall 1996) and (3) goal of participation (Landre and Knuth 1993). Gujit and Shah (1998: 10) identify other problems with participation typologies.

[11] I removed Jiggins' (1993) model from Kelly's table to fit the context of this thesis. Jiggins focuses on technology transfer and resource management, which is not relevant to this thesis.

Table 6.1: Ladder of Participation

Arnstein's (1969) model	Pretty's (1995) model	Cornwall's (1996) model
Citizen Control	Self-mobilization	Collective action (local people set their own agenda and mobilize to carry it out, in the absence of outside initiators and facilitators)
Delegated Power		
Partnership		
	Interactive participation	Co-learning (local people and outsiders share their knowledge, to create new understanding)
	Functional Participation (to achieve goals of external agency)	Cooperation (local people work together with outsiders to determine priorities, responsibility remains with outsiders for directing the process)
Placation (representative on a board or committee)	Participation for material incentives	
Consultation (e.g. attitude survey)	Passive Participation Participation by consultation	Consultation (local opinions asked, outsiders analyse and decide on a course of action)
Informing		Compliance (outsiders decide agenda and direct the process)
Therapy Manipulation	Manipulative participation	Cooption (representatives are chosen)

Source: Kelly (2001: 22), Arnstein (1969), Pretty (1995: 1252), and Cornwall (1996).

powerholders allow have-nots to hear and to have a voice, but retain the right to decide whether they provide such opportunities. *Therapy* and *manipulation* describe levels of 'non-participation'. The real objective of powerholders 'is not to enable people to participate in planing or conducting programs, but to enable powerholders to "educate" or "cure" the participants' (Arnstein 1969: 217).

Pretty's (1995) typology is similar to Arnstein's, but the terms are more relevant to rural agricultural development. He states that 'these range from manipulative and passive participation, where people are told what is to happen and act out predetermined roles, to self-mobilization, where people take initiatives largely independent of external institutions (1995: 1253). He also suggests that the sustainability of the project also relates to this range, for 'the problem with participation as used in types one to four [note: from manipulative participation to functional participation in Table 6.1] is that any achievements are likely to have no positive lasting effect on people's lives' (1995: 1253). Cornwall (1996) has a typology similar to that of Pretty, and he also claims that 'much of what currently passes as 'participatory' involves local people taking part in other people's project, according to agendas set by external interests' (1996: 95).

Sustainability and agenda-setting by outsiders are important factors when examining the implementation of the projects and local perception of the projects.

What Oxfam ultimately aims to achieve is a high level of participation by local people, in line with the concepts of 'citizen control' (Arnstein 1969), 'self-mobilization' (Pretty 1995), and 'collective action' (Cornwall 1996). Oxfam International regards its job as 'enabling people to control ... their own development – to support their self-determination' (Oxfam International 2004).

Another of Oxfam's values that should be explored here is gender equality, which resides within one of the five rights mentioned earlier: 'the right to an identity'. Oxfam International addresses the rights of 'people who are excluded or oppressed because of their gender, ethnic, cultural or other identity' (Oxfam International 2001). Based on Oxfam International's belief in these rights, gender equality is an important part of the values that Oxfam International attempts to promote in its development activity. However, as the literature on women's human rights in an intercultural context suggests, not all cultures appreciate the equal status of women (Hilsdon *et. al.* 2000). How does Oxfam apply equal rights in gender relations to its projects? More broadly, how does Oxfam understand the debate over universalism and cultural relativism?

To this question, the East Asia regional director of Oxfam HK responded in the following way:

> It is important to talk to different social groups within a community. Community is never homogeneous.... it is important to identify which social groups are marginalized and listen to their views. From this we will have some understanding of the reasons for marginalization, which point to a possible direction of work. Gender inequality can usually be found to be an important underlying cause of the marginalization of poor women. Needless to say, we listen more to the marginalized as our mandate is fighting poverty and related injustice.[12]

Because Oxfam deals with marginalized people, it attempts to raise the social status of women within a community. One can imagine, however, a variety of reactions from those who sit in 'higher' positions in the community hierarchy, such as men. The East Asia Regional Director of Oxfam Australia said, 'we recognise that there will be very differing local understandings and practices, and that they will rarely fully align with Oxfam analysis. What we ask for is a preparedness to have dialogue on this, and willingness to be open to change'.[13]

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[12] Written correspondence with a former China Programme Manager and a current Policy Advisor–Gender Equity, 28 March 2006.

[13] Written correspondence with Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, 27 March 2006.

The East Asia Regional Director of Oxfam Australia went on to suggest that the dialogue also aims to identify the needs of the community. In particular, dialogue with different social groups is important, as stated by the East Asia Regional Director:

> Often, the more powerful people in the community will represent what is in their own interests as embodying the only authentic culture, accepted by all the community, whereas in fact others, who do not have as much voice, might take a completely different stance.[14]

Oxfam's focus on the importance of dialogue should be highlighted in comparison with what Kipling (1899) and Said (1994) describe as the idea of the 'civilizing mission': that is, the idea embedded in an asymmetrical image of the relationship between so-called 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' people; and a self-proclaimed sense of duty of the 'civilized' to help the 'uncivilized'. On the one hand, Oxfam 'has a clear commitment to values' and it believes that those values are 'universal', as the East Asia Regional Director of Oxfam Australia made clear.[15] On the one hand, Oxfam is well aware of the importance of dialogue with ethnic communities. The fact that these dual understandings coexist in Oxfam's perception of its own values and beliefs provides an interesting perspective when considering the relevance of the idea of the 'civilizing mission' to international NGOs in the contemporary period. A belief in 'universal values' is apparent, which may be resonant with the idea of the 'civilizing mission', in the sense that an alleged 'civilizer' brings something better to others (Said 1994). However, Oxfam does not have any apparent perception of the asymmetrical relationship between the 'civilized' and the 'uncivilized' as embedded in the idea of the 'civilizing mission'. Oxfam's attention to the importance of dialogue is indicative that the relevance of the idea of the 'civilizing mission' to Oxfam is more marginal.

Reformulation of Identity in Mainland China?

As a secular organization, Oxfam HK is less sensitive about its identity than an international religious NGO might be. However, it is by no means free from political control by the Chinese government. In a Chinese context, its core values, which relate to rights and participation as self-mobilization, are a highly sensitive issue. To what extent does Oxfam HK need to reformulate an identity that consists of its values and beliefs to avoid conflict with the Chinese Communist system? Does Oxfam HK permit its values and beliefs to be compromised in the context of Chinese authoritarianism? If

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[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Interview with Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, in Melbourne, 19 December 2005.

Oxfam HK finds a need to reformulate its identity to enable it to act in mainland China, to what extent does it have the decision-making autonomy to do so?

In order to address these questions, it is first important to explore the extent to which Oxfam HK can act autonomously in relation to Oxfam International. Oxfam International has its global strategic plan, which is shared by the twelve Oxfams, including Oxfam HK. According to the Regional Manager of Oxfam Australia, 'the global strategic plan is deliberately broad, partly because it is well aware of the difference in cultural understanding of rights'.[16] However, the fact that all twelve Oxfams are located in the so-called West (if Hong Kong is understood as a part of the West) raises an interesting question about how relevant the values and beliefs of Oxfam are to non-Western countries. To explore this question, it is essential to examine the actual practices of Oxfam HK in the management of projects in mainland China. This section firstly examines just how independent Oxfam HK really is from Oxfam International in relation to the finance and personnel decisions it makes from time to time. Secondly, it examines the way Oxfam HK designs the community development projects it conducts in mainland China and analyzes whether it reformulates its identity when designing such projects.[17]

Finance and Personnel Relations

With regard to finance, the majority of Oxfam HK's income derives from its own fundraising efforts in Hong Kong. Oxfam HK's total income for Financial Year 2004-05 was HK$137,000,000 (US$17,563,400).[18] According to its *Annual Review 2004-2005* (Oxfam HK 2005: 28), '[m]ost of Oxfam HK's income – 93.2% of its total income for the Year 2004-05 – came from (massive campaigns for) donations from the Hong Kong public'. Oxfam HK also receives funds from 'project funding' accounts in Oxfam offices in other countries. In the same financial year it received HK$5,130,000 (US$657,666) from various other Oxfam offices, only 3.7 per cent of its total income. This 3.7 per cent is reciprocal; that is, Oxfam HK cross-funds projects conducted by other Oxfams.[19] It is unusual for NGOs to be so independent from government funding.

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16 *Ibid.*

17 One of the members who has worked for Oxfam HK since a few years after its establishment noted that she was unaware of Quakerism and its influence on Oxfam HK. Written correspondence with a former China Programme Manager and a current Policy Advisor–Gender Equity, 28 March 2006.

18 The currency exchange rate was HK$1 to US$0.1282 as of 31 March 2005, the end of the financial year.

19 Cross-funding occurs when two Oxfam offices bilaterally fund each other. For example, Oxfam HK agreed to fund Oxfam Australia's projects in Africa for approximately the same amount of funding that Oxfam Australia provides Oxfam HK for projects in mainland China and in Vietnam. The

Such independence is made possible by the highly positive response that Oxfam HK's fundraising efforts receive in Hong Kong.

Oxfam HK's mainland China projects draw on approximately 31 percent of its overall budget (Oxfam HK 2005: 29). In addition, a local project on the mainland usually receives matching funds from local governments. This means Oxfam HK is independent of other Oxfams, and of Western government funding for its China operations.

With regard to personnel, Oxfam HK is also independent from Oxfam International. It employs its own personnel, and applicants for positions with Oxfam HK are, in the main, selected on the basis of relevant development knowledge and experience. For example, Oxfam HK's job advertisements indicate that one of the requirements for development work on the mainland is a 'belief in participatory development and with a gender perspective' (Oxfam HK 2006).

Design of the Community Development Project[20]

The Oxfam HK case study project was an integrated community development project in Muga Township, Lancang Lahu Nationality Autonomous County in the Simao District of Yunnan Province (云南省思茅地区澜沧拉祜族自治县木嘎乡). Since 1993, Oxfam HK has carried out several community development projects in each of eleven poor ethnic natural villages in this township (Oxfam Lancang 2002). Every two to three years, new projects have been undertaken, and each project has been designed based on what was achieved in the previous project. Project content among the eleven villages has differed slightly from village to village. For example, in one of the villages, known as Dalaba Natural Village (*Dalaba Ziran Cun* 大拉巴自然村) (hereafter Dalaba NV),

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amount of so-called cross funding is not necessarily always equal. By way of a particular example, Novib (Oxfam Netherlands) receives a high level of grant funding direct from the Netherlands government that needs to be disbursed in relatively large tranches, so the amount of funding from this Oxfam affiliate to other offices is usually more than it receives from them in return. This happens for two reasons. The first is that each Oxfam has a rather different program profile, and different kinds of partnership arrangements. Some have a much stronger established presence and partnership network in some sectors, or regions, than others. Some fund through large, established partner organisations; others implement a lot of programs directly themselves; others focus on small, emerging NGOs or Community Based Organisations. The second reason is that funds from governments and other institutional donors are usually tied to a variety of conditions, such as limits on the how much of the funding can be used to cover administrative costs. When there is a lower ceiling on administration funds, it is not possible to set up a local office. Each Oxfam thus cooperates with others in a series of bilateral or multilateral relationships for project funds so that funds can be used in the most effective way. Interview and written correspondence with Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, in Melbourne, 19 December 2005, 27 March 2006.

[20] The proposal and report of this project are not available. Most of the data in this section are mainly based on my interviews with Oxfam officials.

where one of the project sites I visited in 2003 was located, Oxfam HK had been engaged on several projects over time, as shown in the Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Oxfam Projects in the Dalaba NV

Year	Project Content
1996	- assisted Laba villagers in the purchase of a 20 *mu* herbal medicine farm (*caoyaodi* 草药地)[21]
1997	- built a medical room based on a cooperative medical scheme (*hezuo yiliao* 合作医疗) - planted a 63 *mu* area with tea leaves – villagers then sold the mature tea and deposited the funds in a village medical fund - provided five village doctors with three months' training and practical experience
1997-1999	- assisted farmers to plant 1012 *mu* with a mixed variety of corn and rice
1998	- extended micro credit to enable farmers to engage in porcine animal husbandry
1998-2000	- provided fifty villagers with training in family health, village health, women's health, and disease prevention - provided one hundred villagers with training in practical farming skills
1998	- planted 400 *mu* with pine trees as part of an environmental protection program
1999	- trained and assisted the members of the community to decide village affairs, and established a community general and financial affairs information display - erected a hall for community use
2000	- provided training for a thirteen-member community management committee (*sheqü guanli weiyuanhui* 社区管理委员会) - provided training in cultivation and animal husbandry
2001-2004	- provided the community management committee with a community development fund

Source: Oxfam Lancang (2002); translated by author.

According to Oxfam HK (2003a: 19), when it started its projects in Lancang County in 1993 the annual income of a villager was less than 200 RMB (about US$24.20), and the annual food intake per capita was less than 200 kilograms. By 2003, the annual income of a villager had more than doubled, but was still only 420 RMB (about US$50.80), far below the Chinese national poverty line of 625 RMB (about US$75.60). Meanwhile, the food intake per capita was up to 280 kilograms.

From 2001 to 2004, Oxfam HK committed itself to an integrated community development project. This project had a number of aspects, one of which was to allow a community management committee (Oxfam HK abbreviates this to 'CO' (stemming from 'community organization')) in each of the eleven villages to manage a community development fund (CDF) in the amount of 200,000 RMB (US$24,200) given to each CO as a loan from Oxfam HK.[22] The idea of the CO is embedded in the rights-based

[21] A *mu* (亩) is a Chinese unit of land equivalent to 66.5 square meters.

[22] The project required finance in the amount of 1,379,400 RMB (approximately US$172,425) for a project in Dalaba NV, and 1,556,000 RMB (approximately US$194,500) in total. Of this, Oxfam HK contributed 1,080,400 RMB for the project in Dalaba NV, and 930,000 RMB for the project in Dabanli Village. The local government contributed 299,000 RMB for Dalaba NV and 626,000 RMB for Dabanli Village. Written correspondence with Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, 19 April

approach to development, which is an approach shared by both Oxfam International and Oxfam HK. It relates to the right to a sustainable livelihood, and the right to be heard, with special emphasis on 'empowering poor and excluded people to gain access to and control over the assets that help them to sustain their livelihood' (Oxfam International 2001).

In order to explain the characteristics of the CO project, it is useful to compare them with the characteristics of the Village Committee (VC). Recall the explanation of the role of the VC in Chapter Five (p. 159). The VC is a Chinese mass organization at the grassroots level, established under the Provisional Organic Law of Villager Committees Law. The members of the VC are directly elected by the villagers, and the VC is conventionally in charge of discussing village affairs. These VC characteristics, therefore, appear to be very similar to those of the CO. What is the rationale of the CO project? What are the differences between the CO and the VC? What kind of benefit did Oxfam HK envisage the CO project provided the villagers? Discussing how Oxfam HK differentiates the CO from the VC is helpful in gaining an insight into the question of this section; whether Oxfam HK reformulates its identity when designing the projects it plans to conduct in mainland China.

My interviews with Oxfam HK's Programme Officer revealed that there are five main differences of the CO from the VC. The first is the CO's financial foundation, which is the CDF, compared to the VC's lack of financial resources. The CO can make practical decisions about community affairs because it controls the finances; such control is supposed to give the CO greater independence from other institutions, such as local governments and the VC.[23]

The second difference of the CO from the VC is the CO's aim to encourage participation as self-mobilization. In the terms of the participation literature, Oxfam HK's objective in having the CO manage its own projects in the community can be understood as being consistent with what Pretty (1995) calls the 'self-mobilization' of villagers. 'Self-mobilization' is the highest level of participation, a level that could lead people to 'take initiatives largely independent of external institutions' (1995: 1253). In the CO in Lancang, 'external institutions' means not only Oxfam HK but also such political institutions as the VC and the central and local governments. The CO system

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2005. Oxfam initially expected that the community would make a profit by using the CDF, for example, by raising interest from micro-credit, so that the project is owned by the locals. However, by the end of 2005, this looked less promising. Interview with China Programme Manager, Oxfam HK, in Hong Kong, 16 December 2005.

is, according to Oxfam HK staff, very effective in such circumstances because the decision-making process in the CO enables the villagers first to retrieve their sense of community by democratic decision-making and participation as self-mobilization, second to become more self-reliant through undertaking community development by themselves, and third to create a sense of equality among themselves. The CO represents the interests of the natural village, and by managing the CDF, the villagers strengthen their sense of community, which leads them to ask themselves 'how can *we* improve *our* village?' In contrast, the VC does not pay as much attention as the CO does to participation as 'self-mobilization'. According to Oxfam HK's Programme Officer, communication between the VC members and the villagers is not as smooth as that between the CO and the villagers. The VC holds so-called 'villagers' representative assemblies' (*cunmin daibiao huiyi* 村民代表会议) once or twice a year, but the extent to which the VC system provides democracy for individual villagers is the subject of scholarly discussion (Kelliher 1997; Wang 2003; Chan 2003). What is commonly suggested by a number of scholars, however, is that such villagers' representative assemblies might encourage some degree of participation, but they do not lead to participation as 'self-mobilization'. According to Chan (2003: 199) for example, the reason for this is that villagers' representative assemblies are mostly 'subservient to village Party branches and Villager Committees'. In this respect, the CO differs insofar as it provides the villagers with opportunities to discuss community affairs.

The third difference of the CO from the VC is the attention to the marginalized people in the CO project; in particular, the emphasis on gender equality. Decisions taken by the CO supposedly have a better chance of reflecting the interests of those of low status in natural villages, which is to say in particular the women. The CO is comprised of five village representatives elected by all the villagers, including not only wealthier or higher status people but also poorer and lower status people such as women.[24] The CO system was designed also for the purpose of raising the social status of women: at least one in five CO members has to be a woman.[25] In contrast, the VC members rarely include women. Oxfam HK envisaged that the CO provides an opportunity for the villagers to develop their ability to make decisions as a

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[23] Written correspondence with a former China Programme Manager and a current Policy Advisor–Gender Equity, 28 March 2006.

[24] Interview with Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, in Kunming, 11 November 2003.

[25] *Ibid.* At first glance, 'one in five' seems unequal. This discrepancy will be discussed later when I discuss local interactions.

community. [26] In the past, in the planned economy of the Communist regime, government and/or traditional leaders intervened in the political, economic and social lives of the villagers to a significant extent. As a result, the villagers to a large degree grew dependent on the government, both materially and psychologically, because they did not have an opportunity to express their opinion as a community.

The fourth difference of the CO from the VC is that while the VC is based in 'administrative villages', the CO is based in 'natural villages'. Recall the explanation of China's village system in Chapter Four. There exist two kinds of village: the administrative village and the natural village. Reportedly, the villagers seldom listen to their village head, or to local government, because the village head is the head of the administrative village, not the natural village. Some villagers expressed scepticism about the directions their VCs take. My interviews with officials from a number of NGOs revealed that despite the VC's direction in a village, villagers often decline indirectly to contribute their labour to the building of the village infrastructure. They did so because they believed it may have served the interests of the (administrative) VC and the local government, rather than those of their own natural village. As will be explained later, this difference between the administrative village and the natural village is the key to understanding the different outcomes in two natural villages I visited.

The fifth important difference of the CO from the VC is the CO's characteristics as non-political organization. The VC has its relationships with superior political institutions, such as the township and county governments. As Wang (2003) suggests, villagers' committees are dual natured, serving as the state's administrative units at the bottom of the hierarchy, and as grassroots self-government social organizations. Through the system of villagers' committees, the CCP leadership aims to achieve social stability and the efficient implementation of policies such as family planning and tax collection at the local level, rather than achieve the democratisation of the Chinese countryside (Wang 2003). In contrast, the CO, at least in theory, is not driven by hierarchical concerns. Rather, it can be described as an organization that makes decisions about the public affairs of the community.

These five differences lead to a critical question that determines the nature of the CO: how independent can the CO be of the political system in China? At the outset of the CO project in Lancang, Oxfam HK did not define or limit the extent to which the CO could be independent of external political institutions, and Oxfam HK left the issue

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[26] *Ibid.*

of the CO's independence to the circumstances of each village.[27] However, Oxfam HK did intend for the CO 'to be a local NGO' in the sense that it could maintain some kind of independence from the VC.[28] The next section, therefore, explores the way in which Oxfam HK has dealt with the political constraints posed by the Chinese authoritarian system.

Strategic Calculation

According to the East Asia Regional Director of Oxfam Australia, 'ten years ago, it would not have been possible to carry out the CO project directly at the grassroots, because local officials were more suspicious of outsider projects that aimed to empower villagers'.[29] To accommodate the Chinese government, Oxfam HK had to finely calculate the political risk of conducting the CO project in mainland China. To do so required Oxfam HK's strong network of contacts in Chinese central and local government agencies, as well as experience gathered during the course of carrying out numerous development projects in various places across China over more than a decade.[30]

It seems the Chinese government and Oxfam HK perceive the meaning of projects conducted by Oxfam HK from different points of view. From the local government's point of view, as a local government official emphasized, the CO was useful in encouraging the villagers to participate in community affairs and that therefore the villagers had become increasingly willing to participate in discussion.[31] In addition, the CO had a non-political nature. It did not conflict with the existing VC system, because it did not usurp the political role of the VC, or aim to contradict the VC's decision.[32] Nor was the CO designed as an institution that would promote the civil and political rights of villagers. The fact that the CO is apolitical makes it possible to view it as a tool to encourage villagers to participate in public affairs in a way that does not usurp the political role of the VC.

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27 Interview with Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, in Kunming, 11 November 2003.

28 *Ibid.*

29 Oxfam Australia funded a project in this area in the middle of the 1990s. Interview with Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, in Melbourne, 19 December 2005.

30 Interview with Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, in Melbourne, 19 December 2005.

31 Interview with a Muga Township government official in Muga Township, 19 November 2003.

32 My field research did not identify any cases in which the CO's decision-making contradicted that the VC. However, there is no mechanism for avoiding conflict between the CO and the VC. Overall, the relationship between the CO and the VC is ambiguously defined by Oxfam. Therefore, it is, in theory, possible for the CO's decisions to conflict with those of the VC. The reality of the relationship will be discussed further later.

From Oxfam HK's point of view, however, the CO project is the result of fine political calculation, and the CO is something that Western development literature discusses as being on the highest level of the ladder of participation (Pretty 1995). Put differently, Oxfam HK is attempting to get away from the political constraint in mainland China, while the local government thinks Oxfam HK is simply helping alleviate poverty by encouraging villagers to participate in community affairs.

Such strategic calculations of the extent to which it might need to accommodate its values to suit Chinese political constraints can also be found in Oxfam HK's other projects in China. For example, the organization has dealt with a number of advocacy projects the Chinese government deems sensitive, occupying about thirty percent of total projects in China (Wong 2004: 29). One of the advocacy projects dealt with labour rights. 'In 1996, Oxfam started to work on labour issues, particularly in urban areas and with migrant workers, who were more vulnerable than mainstream workers' (Wong 2004: 29). In general, the Chinese government was sensitive about 'rights' discourse, but Oxfam HK supported 'many local groups across China to provide workers with legal aid, training, and an awareness of their rights'. For example, it helped set up China's first trade union for informal workers in Xi'an (Oxfam HK 2005: 16). It also established legal services and training for migrant workers in the Pearl River Delta Region in Guangdong Province (Oxfam HK 2005: 22).

By way of another example, Oxfam HK provided a variety of support to a local group in Lijiang, called the Green Watershed, which included local academics and community members.[33] This group has undertaken some research on the impact of major dams on local communities. 'Results were fed back to the communities, dam project leaders and local government' (Oxfam Australia 2003). Oxfam HK's intention was 'to support the right of local people to have their voices heard in decisions that affect their lives' (Oxfam Australia 2003).

This project on researching the impact of damming and another to help sex workers in Guangxi in relation to HIV/AIDS started as pilot initiatives, but eventually these kinds of projects became mainstream.[34] The change from pilot initiatives to mainstream projects shows Oxfam HK's efforts to take an incremental approach and to gradually circumvent the political constraints in mainland China. In doing so, diversity within China with regard to geography and political sensitivity has been an important factor. The sensitivity of topics differs depending on the geographic area in question.

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[33] This project was also funded by Oxfam Australia (Oxfam Australia 2003).

When a project was initiated by Oxfam HK, it was carried out in areas where the political and social atmosphere was relatively open. When projects proved successful, Oxfam HK tried to undertake similar projects in other relatively closed areas, and to make Oxfam HK's impact greater on the mainland. For example, in the mid 1990s, labour rights advocacy was do-able in China's coastal areas. However, local governments in western China exercised tighter control over their own regions, and were more sensitive about dealing with rights issues than were local governments in the coastal areas. Therefore, the labour rights advocacy project began in Guangdong in 1996; now, however, labour rights projects are conducted in not only Guangdong, Beijing and Shanghai, but also in western China, including in Xi'an, Hunan, and Chongqing (Oxfam HK 2005: 16, 22).[35] Oxfam HK's broad network of information and research has allowed it to take into account the diversity in political openness and sensitivity within China. This makes it possible for Oxfam HK to initiate a project most likely to succeed in China and then to gradually enlarge the geographic and thematic spaces that Oxfam HK enjoys.

Local Interactions

The case study Oxfam integrated development project was undertaken in four natural villages in the Muga Township. This thesis investigates two of them: the Dalaba NV; and the Dabanli Natural Village (*Dabanli Ziran Cun* 大班利自然村) (hereafter Dabanli NV). The former is one of the four natural villages in the Laba Administrative Village (*Laba Xingzheng Cun* 拉巴行政村). Dalaba NV has 271 households and a total population of 1,125.[36] Dabanli NV is one of the five natural villages in Banli Administrative Village (*Banli Xingzheng Cun* 班利行政村). This section begins by identifying the multiple communities existing within these two natural villages. On the basis of my analysis of the multiple communities in each, this section then examines how each of the multiple communities responded to Oxfam's project and values. As will be explained later, difference in how each of the communities in these two villages was formed resulted in a remarkable difference in the outcomes of the project. Therefore, it is essential to understand these multiple communities.

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[34] Interview with Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, in Melbourne, 19 December 2005.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] Written correspondence with Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, 19 April 2006.

Multiple Communities

There are at least two communities in each of the two natural villages being examined (Dalaba and Dabanli): one based on the administrative village hierarchy (hereafter AV community), and one based on the natural village hierarchy (hereafter NV community). The AV community, as mentioned earlier, has a villagers' committee (VC) at the top of its hierarchy. However, the sense the villagers in the Dalaba and Dabanli NV communities have of belonging to each of their respective multiple communities varies.[37]

In the case of the Dalaba NV, according to the Oxfam Programme Coordinator, the villagers have a stronger sense of belonging to their NV community, than to their AV community. There are two apparent reasons for this. First, the Laba AV is large, and the villagers of the Dalaba NV community do not have daily contact with others in the neighbouring natural villages within the Laba administrative village. Even though the Dalaba NV community members directly elect the members of the VC, they do not have a close relationship with those elected members.[38]

The second reason for the strong sense of belonging to their NV community among the Dalaba villagers relates to their belief in Christianity. All the villagers in the Dalaba NV hold Christian beliefs. According to the local church minister, in 1907, British missionaries came to this village and converted the villagers from animism to Christianity. Today, all of the villagers go to church on Sundays, and the old minister has an excellent reputation, having earned and maintained the trust of the villagers. When the ethnic community members disagree among themselves, they go to the minister and ask him for help in resolving their problems.[39] In fact, he plays a very important role in this village, in the sense that he binds all the community members together. Before each Sunday service starts, he talks about village development, farming, some notices from the local government, and the implications of any new government policy relating to the village. When he finishes, people start praying. This minister has worked as a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) at the county level for fifteen years and as a supervisory committee member of the VC for two years.

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37 This section uses 'villagers' to refer to the 'community members' used throughout this thesis in order to avoid complication in the explanation.

38 Interview with Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, in Kunming, 11 November 2003.

39 Interview with Church Minister, in Dalaba NV, 18 November 2003..

In the main, the Dalaba NV community is based on the Christian belief of its villagers. Based on their belief in Christianity and on the respect they have for their minister, the villagers are quite strongly united, and have an equally strong sense of community. When their minister advertises something during the Sunday service, people listen to him with great respect, so the relationship between the local government and villagers seems very good.

In relation to the Dabanli NV, the sense its villagers have of belonging to their respective communities contrasts to that discussed above in relation to the Dalaba NV. The sense the villagers in the Dabanli NV community have of belonging to the Banli AV community is stronger than the sense they have of belonging to their NV community. Again, there are two apparent reasons for this. The first is that the relationship between the VC and the villagers is much closer in the Dabanli NV than in the Dalaba NV. In fact, coincidentally, the administrative village head came from the Dabanli NV, and the villagers there knew him fairly well. Therefore, the villagers in the Dabanli NV have a strong sense of belonging to the Banli AV community, and they are to a greater extent dependent on the VC in the Banli AV. Meanwhile, the villagers in the Dabanli NV community do not meet informally, such as at church gatherings. According to Oxfam Programme Coordinator, this might be one of the reasons for their weaker sense of community, and why it is difficult to operate the CO system in the Dabanli NV.[40]

Local Reponses to Project: Villagers' Committee and Community Organization

The existence of these multiple communities had an important impact on the CO project undertaken by Oxfam HK. While Oxfam HK set up the CO in the NV communities, the VC lay at the top of the social and political hierarchies in the AV communities. In theory, the CO was supposed to be independent of the VC's influence.[41] One of the important differences of the CO from the VC was to encourage villagers' participation as 'self-mobilization'. The 'self' in this case naturally did not mean the local government or the VC, but all the villagers on the ground. Therefore, as the Programme Officer mentioned, separation of the CO from the VC was something Oxfam aspired to. Oxfam was afraid the CO would eventually be absorbed into the VC because of the VC's relative authority and its political background. If this were to happen, naturally,

40 Interview with Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, in Kunming, 11 November 2003.

41 *Ibid.*

the Community Development Fund (CDF) that Oxfam provided the CO would be redundant.[42]

The Programme Officer stressed, however, that Oxfam did not force the villagers to separate the CO from the VC. The decision to separate was based on the villagers' wishes, and was 'only natural'.[43] Before directly electing the members of the CO in each of the NV communities, the Programme Officer asked the villagers in Dalaba NV and Dabanli NV to discuss whether the VC members should be included in the CO. As a result of this discussion, the villagers in both Dalaba and Dabanli NVs agreed that the VC members should not be included in the CO.

In reality, however, the villagers in those NV communities responded very differently during discussion of the extent to which the CO should maintain its independence from the VC. What follows is a discussion of the difference between the two NV communities, and the reason such difference occurred.

Dalaba NV

After the decision to separate the CO from the VC in Dalaba NV, the CO members had the capacity to take decisions as a community and to manage the CDF. After the project had been underway for a while, the Programme Officers discussed with the villagers of the Dalaba NV whether the VC members could be included in the CO. The villagers in Dalaba NV decided that the CO would remain separate from the VC, because they did not want to end up reverting to a hierarchical power relationship under the VC. An analysis of this process using the frames of interaction suggests that the response of the members of the Dalaba NV community, who were generally happy with the values of the CO project, reflected the features of the adaptation frame.

However, it is important to note how Oxfam HK's local Programme Officer and villagers actually interacted. When Oxfam staff members and the author visited the villages under investigation, one of the tasks of the Oxfam staff members was to discuss in greater detail the role of the CO, and how the villagers resolved conflicts among themselves. In the Dalaba NV, Oxfam HK's local coordinator, some local Oxfam staff members, and about ten villagers, decided to hold a meeting in the open under a tree, not indoors in a concrete building. Oxfam HK is locally sensitive enough to appreciate that holding meetings in a building is far too formal and may actually discourage villagers from expressing opinions and otherwise participating in meetings. Oxfam HK

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42 *Ibid.*

actively tried to avoid a formal teacher-student, lecture style set up when conducting meetings. At the meeting under the tree, the Oxfam Programme Officer, who came from Kunming, asked the villagers questions such as: 'what does participation mean?' and 'if you are discussing how the CDF should be used, and there is disagreement among the participants, how would you deal with that?' No one replied. 'Do you have any ideas?' she asked. There was still silence. After a few awkward moments, she said, 'those are the sorts of questions that Oxfam wants you to think about'.

The villagers at the meeting did not appear uncomfortable about the meeting, or about what the Programme Officer was saying. An Oxfam staff member admitted that 'as a funding agency, one has to be aware of the unequal power relations amongst our stakeholders, including our primary stakeholders. We have to be reflective that sometimes in order to ensure funding support, partners might feel uneasy about disagreement'.[44]

Discussion at the meeting described above was basically led by the Programme Officer, partly because of the level of discussion. This leads to the important question of whether villagers perceive Oxfam's project as an imposition of values. The villagers' perception depended on how exactly the Programme Officer and other Oxfam staff members interacted with the villagers, not only at the meeting but also in normal circumstances. Of importance was that Oxfam had local staff members and local government officials who could speak both the Lahu language and Mandarin. Even though the Programme Officer from Kunming, who speaks Mandarin, cannot communicate with the local villagers in the Lahu language, Oxfam's local staff members and government officials, who were also trained in the value of participation, talk to villagers, and maintain close communication. Oxfam's local officers and government officials progress the project day to day, and therefore it was extremely important that they nurture good communication with the villagers.

Furthermore, the villagers' silence at the meeting leads one to question the way in which the villagers participated at this level of discussion. Again, this leads to examining the project according to the ladder of participation. Oxfam's aim in this project was 'self-mobilization' (Pretty 1995) or 'collective action' (Cornwall 1996), the highest degree of participation on the ladder. In reality, however, the extent to which all the villagers 'set their own agenda and mobilize to carry it out, in the absence of outside

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[43] *Ibid.*

[44] Written correspondence with a former China Programme Manager and a current Policy Advisor–Gender Equity, 28 March 2006.

initiators and facilitators' is highly questionable (Cornwall 1996: 96). The villagers *join* the CO, but that does not necessarily mean that they are *expressing* opinions at the meeting, or contributing to discussion. It is essential to critically assess the reality of participation by the villagers, when considering the impact of this project on this village.

However, Oxfam did not pay much attention to relations with the community centred on the administrative village (VC). Even though the church minister had influence over the VC, the VC members did not understand the role of the CO. Oxfam's lack of attention to the community centred on the administrative village can be understood as fitting within the conflict frame.

Dabanli NV

In Dabanli NV, the CO did not work very well because the capacity of the CO members to manage their own affairs was lower than among the CO members in the Dalaba NV. The Banli administrative village head, who was originally from the Dabanli NV, was the only person with the management skill necessary to operate the CO in the Dabanli NV, according to Oxfam HK's local coordinator. Faced with this lower capacity, the villagers in the Dabanli NV decided that the CO would include the administrative village head because he displayed exceptional leadership, not only in the Banli administrative village but also in the Dabanli NV.[45]

However, the members of the Dabanli NV community were not in accord over the values of the CO project. Their response reflects the features of the conflict frame. Arguably, there are two factors that resulted in the different outcomes in the two NV communities. One is an obvious lack of capacity to manage the fund on the part of the members of the Dabanli NV community. The other, more important, factor was the different senses the villagers had of belonging to their communities.

In the Dabanli NV community, Oxfam did not comprehend pre-existing social relationships, in which the role of the administrative village head was particularly important. The members of the Dabanli NV community did not have as strong a sense of community as those of the Dalaba NV community. The members of the Dabanli NV community felt attached to the administrative village, and not necessarily to the natural village. Oxfam's failure to comprehend the social relations in the Dabanli NV community reflects the features of the conflict frame.

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[45] Interview with Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, in Kunming, 11 November 2003.

The efforts of Oxfam HK in Dalaba NV and Dabanli NV produced contrasting results. In Dalaba NV, in spite of Oxfam HK's non-religious principle, the Christian church and the influential local minister facilitated Oxfam HK's CO project. This provided the project with legitimacy, and everyone in the community cooperated in the project. Also, the fact that the church system related to economic matters and to people's lives (because they would miss the opportunity to get information on the Dalaba NV affairs if they did not go to church) encouraged the Dalaba NV community's youths to go to church, in spite of their general tendency to not go to church as often as their elders. In contrast, the Dabanli NV CO project was not as successful as the one in the Dalaba NV because there was no Dabanli community to bind the villagers together and strengthen their sense of community. It is ironic that a secular NGO can work with a religious local community more effectively than a religious NGO can.

The situations in the Dalaba and Dabanli NV communities raise the question of how, once Oxfam leaves these villages, the CO—which is not based on any legal framework in China—can maintain its independence from the VC, which is a legal entity in the Chinese polity at the bottom end of the vertical system of government. Prima facie, there are two possible reasons why the CO might be subordinate to the VC. First, because the CO is a natural village level entity, it needs access to an overarching administrative village level entity when it wants to deal with other natural village level entities, in relation to an enterprise, such as constructing a road that extends to other villages, or that affects other natural villages in the administrative village in some other way. This makes the CO vulnerable to overruling by the VC. Second, VC members do not appreciate the importance of the CO to the natural village, or/and they might not want to relinquish power to the CO. In fact, one interview with VC members in the Laba administrative village revealed that the members did not fully understand the importance of the CO the way Oxfam expected them to. The VC members stated that the strength of the CO lay in its ownership of the CDF, but that the VC was helping the CO by means of funding, supervision and planning.[46] It seems that the VC members thought that the CO was an organization under the supervision of the VC. Without the VC's full understanding, it may be that the CO is likely to be integrated into the VC once Oxfam leaves the village.

[46] Interview with VC members in Dalaba NV, 18 November 2003.

In this regard, the Dalaba and Dabanli NV communities experienced very different project impacts. In the Dalaba NV community, in spite of Oxfam's non-religious principle, the Christian church and the influential local minister facilitated Oxfam's project. In other words, because of the binding role of the church minister, and Oxfam's informal cooperation with him, Oxfam successfully utilized the social relations existing in communities centred on the natural village and on religious belief. On the contrary, the Dabanli NV community project was not as successful as that in the Dalaba NV community, because of the weaker sense of community in the Dabanli NV. The weaker sense of community was also relevant to the fact that the Dabanli NV community did not have a religious leader to bind all the villagers together.

Local Reaction to Values: Gender Equality

Oxfam attempted to spread the idea of gender equality to the villagers through such practices as direct election of the CO members and 'participation' in general meetings called by the CO. However, local reaction to such ideas differed from the Dalaba NV to the Dabanli NV. In fact, the two NV communities provided contrasting images with respect to social relationships among the villagers. In interviews with some members of the Dalaba NV community, for example, the atmosphere was quite open and relaxed, and many men talked about their understanding of the CO. Women in the Dalaba NV community initially looked very shy, and hesitated to stand up and introduce themselves to me and other visitors. Nevertheless, after some encouragement from others, they started to introduce themselves in turn. According to the local Programme Officer, this process led the women to realize that they could make a speech in public, eventually increasing their confidence.[47] It cannot be asserted that the values Oxfam sought to spread in this village have firmly taken root, but my impression is that the notion of gender equality has the potential to spread to the members of the Dalaba NV community. The responses of the ethnic community members reflect the features of the adaptation frame.

However, gender equality does not lie simply in being able to introduce oneself. The ultimate goal, according to the Oxfam International's Strategic Plan (Oxfam International 2001), is the realization by marginalised people that they 'will have an effective voice in influencing decisions affecting their lives; and will gain the moral support and skills they need to exercise these rights'; in particular, women 'will enjoy

[47] Interview with Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, in Kunming, 11 November 2003.

equal rights and status'. It is therefore important to note that, while there is potential for the spread of gender equality to Dalaba NV, it seems there is a long way to go to reach such a lofty realization. In the adaptation frame, the pre-existing social relations in the village should not be overlooked. Before the value of gender equality takes root in this community, it seems that there is still a great journey ahead of the community.

In the Dabanli NV community, spreading the value of equality appears to be even more difficult than in the Dalaba NV community, and the responses of the members in the Dabanli NV community reflect the features of the conflict frame. To begin with, when the author visited the village, members of the Dabanli NV community did not introduce themselves. The administrative village head, who came from the Dabanli NV, was one of the CO members elected after the discussion on the relationship between the VC and the CO, mentioned earlier. He introduced everybody. When I asked a few questions, it was he who replied to all of them. Even when I directed my questions away from him to someone else, it was the village head who imposed himself and replied. When the village head was politely asked to not speak, and the other villagers were encouraged to contribute to the discussion, the villagers seemed unable or reluctant to do so, either persistently glancing in the direction of the village head as if inviting him to speak on their behalf, or averting their eyes groundward. According to Oxfam staff, the members of the Dabanli NV community have limited capacity to lead, or to manage finance or other important village matters, instead preferring to follow, deferring in all things to the village head, who is a decisive leader. Without the village head, the villagers could not manage the CDF and had failed to operate the CO system. Because of the villagers' dependence on the village head, and their lack of management ability, it was extremely difficult for Oxfam to spread the value of equality. Rather, the value of gender equality seems almost irrelevant in these circumstances. The effectiveness of the CO project in each of the villages varies, as does the relevance to the villagers of the value of gender equality. This difference is a reflection of the different characters found in the inhabitants of the two villages.

The interaction between Oxfam and ethnic community members in relation to the value of gender equality was very different in the Dalaba and Dabanli NV communities. In the Dalaba NV community, because of the opportunity that the CO provided to women, the attitudes and the status of the women changed somewhat. The changes were subtle, and Oxfam HK did not expect gender equality to be achieved in a couple of years. The fact that Oxfam provided the villagers with the basis on which gender equality could gradually develop was already relevant and meaningful, and amounted to

a success from Oxfam HK's point of view. Therefore, the interaction between Oxfam HK and the ethnic community members in the Dalaba NV community, again, reflected the features of the adaptation frame.

However, to the members of the Dabanli NV community, this chapter has argued, gender equality did not seem to have much relevance because of a pre-existing social hierarchy. Therefore, gender equality in the Dabanli NV community reflected the features of the conflict frame.

Conclusion

This chapter has first demonstrated that even though the Oxfams are committed to their values and beliefs and even though they believe that their values and beliefs are universal, they are also emphatic about the importance of local diversity. The coexistence, within Oxfams' set of values and beliefs, of the idea of the universality of their values and beliefs and their emphasis on local diversity contributes an important insight into our understanding of the relevance of the idea of the 'civilizing mission' today. 'Universality' and 'local diversity' are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

This chapter has also demonstrated that Oxfam HK attempts to take an incremental approach and to push the edge of the envelope of what it can do under the Chinese authoritarian system, even though there are limits on the extent to which Oxfam can practise its own values and beliefs. It has argued that Oxfam HK did not reformulate its identity in mainland China. Indeed, its CO project is not a result of political compromise with the Chinese government. Rather, it represents a direct realization of its values and beliefs.

There have been three important findings in relation to local interactions. First, what is most important to the religious-secular comparison of this thesis is that Oxfam utilized the religiously-oriented community when implementing its project. Even though Oxfam is a secular NGO, its emphasis on local diversity led it to cooperate cautiously with the religiously oriented community. The solidarity within the religiously oriented community generated social capital, and raised the level of cooperation between Oxfam HK and the villagers in the ethnic community. The religious community was, I have argued, the key to the adaptation frame of interaction. By contrast, the conflict frame in Dabanli NV was due to the lack of a sense of community and local capacity.

The second point is that the way the Programme Officer communicated with villagers in ethnic community was the key to distinguishing the conflict frame from the adaptation frame. This fact underscores the point that sometimes the line between the conflict frame and the adaptation frame is a fine one.

The third point is that it was difficult for Oxfam HK to convey such values as 'gender equality' and belief in 'participation' as self-mobilization to both villages because the pre-existing local values and practices mitigated against a local adaptation of those values. Even though, for example, in Dalaba NV, the status of women slightly improved, gender relations in this village were far from Oxfam's ultimate aim of 'gender equality'. The reality of villager 'participation' was also questioned.

Chapters Four to Six have investigated various interactions between the three case study NGOs and ethnic communities. The conclusion of this thesis will present a comparative analysis of the three case studies in the contemporary period, and bring the contemporary and historical findings of my empirical investigation together.

CONCLUSION

This thesis began with Kipling and Said's description of the idea of the 'civilizing mission' as being based on the asymmetrical image of the relationship between the 'civilized' and the 'uncivilized'. One of the more important objectives of this thesis has been to explore historical change and continuity in the idea of the 'civilizing mission'. Having empirically investigated across time the idea of the 'civilizing mission' undertaken by the Chinese centre and several international religious agencies, what follows brings together the historical and contemporary findings of this thesis. By analyzing how the interactions between international religious agencies and ethnic communities have transformed over time, this thesis supports the enduring relevance of the idea of the 'civilizing mission'. It does not, however, advocate the simplistic view that today's international religious NGO is yesteryear's Christian missionary. Instead, it argues that the idea of a 'civilizing mission' based on the unidirectional imposition of values and beliefs is too simplistic.

The purpose of the conclusion is two-fold. The first purpose is to point out two important and enduring key dimensions that need attention in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of the Christian 'civilizing mission' in China: first, the possibility of dialogue and exchange of ideas between international religious agencies and local people; and second, the fact that interaction can lead to positive consequences such as the self-realization of ethnic communities and the raising of the level of literacy. The second purpose of the conclusion is to discuss the implications these two important insights have for our broader understanding of the changing nature of the Christian 'civilizing mission'.

The conclusion is divided into four sections. The first section revisits my discussion in Part One of this thesis and analyzes the entangled relationship between civilizational identity and religion from the points of view of the Chinese centre, and of Christians. The second section focuses on change and continuity in the international religious agencies, with regard to two of the three broad themes: the origins and nature of values, and the reformulation of identity in mainland China. The third section discusses the third theme of my empirical investigation, that is, the interactions with ethnic communities. After analyzing the empirical findings, this section revisits the three frames of interaction that have been used throughout this thesis.

Entangled Relationship between Civilizational Identity and Religion

Part One of this thesis discussed how the concepts of civilizational identity and religion have been entangled over time. At the theoretical level, Chapter One has argued that the identity of those who undertake the 'civilizing mission' is a self-proclaimed one constructed as a result of interaction with others. Accordingly, interaction with others transforms and constructs civilizational identity and the way religious values are located within the civilizational identity. Conceptualizing the relationship between civilizational identity and religion in such a way proved to be appropriate in the course of investigating the two kinds of 'civilizing missions' in Chapters Two and Three, those of China's centre and those of the Christian missionaries. Chapter Two demonstrated that the Chinese centre's understanding of the relationship between civilizational identity and religion has undergone significant change over time as a result of its interaction with the West. While the Qing Dynasty understood religion as occupying a position beneath the superior notion of civilization, from the perspective of the Chinese centre in the Republican period, religion had to be separated from Chinese civilizational identity. The separation of religion from Chinese civilizational identity further evolved in the Communist period, and the two concepts ultimately opposed each other. The civilizational identity of the Christian missionaries, as Chapter Three demonstrated, consisted of mere Christianity in the nineteenth century. In the early twentieth century, however, more and more missionaries began to merge 'Western civilization', understood as modernization, with Christianity, and attempted to spread the values and beliefs featured in the merging of the two.[1] This occurred as a result of the increasing exposure of the missionaries to local communities in non-Western areas. These two kinds of 'civilizing mission' commonly attempted to include 'Western civilization', mainly understood by both Chinese and Christian missionaries as modernization, as either the core or at least a part of their respective 'civilizing missions'. On the other hand, the shift in the conceptual relationship between civilizational identity and Christianity led to a differentiation between the Chinese centre and Christian missionaries.

While China's centre *separated* Christianity from Western civilization, the Christian missionaries *merged* Christianity with Western civilization. Such a differentiation observable in the early twentieth century, continues today. The investigation in Part Two focuses more on the way Christian NGOs have perceived their

civilizational identity; that is, the kind of values and beliefs they have promoted among China's ethnic communities from the nineteenth century to date. What is observable is a thread that connects the various ways international religious agencies have perceived their civilizational identity over time.

Change and Continuity: International Religious Agencies

Values and Beliefs of International Religious Agencies

The emphasis by 'missionaries' on Western civilization, as represented by modernization, strengthened in the early twentieth century, and by the 1920s, the secularization of Christian missions had begun. Technology, medicine, and science actually helped to reinforce the superior status of the Christian missionaries with respect to the ethnic communities they sought to evangelize. Christian missionaries sought involvement with the mission of 'modernity' to varying degrees. The increasing involvement of Christian missionaries in educational and medical work further encouraged secularization. One example of this was clearly seen in the discussion of the transformation in Oxfam's case study: from a group of Quaker missionaries in the early twentieth century to the secular NGO of 1943.

While the secularization of the Christian mission is identifiable from a broader historical perspective, this does not mean that evangelization is no longer taking place. Even today JHF and The Salvation Army still place a strong emphasis on evangelism. At the same time, their emphasis on educational and medical works in the actual projects they conduct on mainland China are in some ways similar to those of the early twentieth century Christian missionaries. It is important to stress that even within the context of Communist China, Christianity is a very important belief among international Christian NGOs. The empirical chapters on JHF and The Salvation Army demonstrated that both NGOs have placed quite a strong emphasis on Christian evangelism since their establishment. Today, members of both NGOs outside mainland China draw on that emphasis, and attempt to influence the lives of Chinese people through 'compassion' based on their biblical understanding (JHF), and by meeting human physical and spiritual needs (the Army). These attempts to influence people's lives are closely related to the purpose of informing poor people about the love of Jesus Christ.

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[1] As Chapter Five discussed, there were fundamentalist minorities, such as The Salvation Army in the early twentieth century.

At the same time, those projects that merged Western civilization as modernization with Christianity, by way of an example, can be seen in the fields of agriculture, sanitation, or Western medicine. The international Christian NGOs surveyed tend to believe that their values, beliefs and activities, thus composed of a mixture of Christianity and modernity, help ethnic communities achieve higher levels of economic and human development as well as attain a higher level of spirituality.

In short, two international Christian NGOs undertook projects that introduced advanced technology and sought to weave Christianity into their projects, as discussed in Part Two. I argue, therefore, that the roots of the values and beliefs that contemporary international religious NGOs are attempting to promote lie in what we observed in the early twentieth century context: 'Western civilization merged with Christianity'. From this analysis, the values and beliefs of the international religious agencies in the early twentieth century and those in the twenty-first century tend to reflect a degree of continuity.

Irrespective of whether their values are religious or secular, it is important to recognize that all three international NGOs believe they can bring something better to people of other religions, and to people living in poverty, by spreading their values among them. In other words, all the international agencies examined have undertaken their activity in China with a firm belief in their own values, or even a sense of the confident 'universality' or 'absoluteness' of their values. In this sense, religious and secular organizations both presuppose their values to be superior to those of 'economically or spiritually poor people'. Secular development practitioners and scholars, as well as government aid agencies, argue that only religious organizations tend to 'proselytize' or promote their own religious values by using development as a tool (Crehan 2005). However, the findings of my investigation reveal that such an argument is inappropriate, because it assumes a clear distinction between religious proselytization as unethical and secular proselytization (for example promoting the concept of gender equality) as ethical. This argument overlooks the fact that secular NGOs also attempt to promote *their own* values. Thus the idea of 'evangelism' can not be understood only in a religious context. *The New Shorter Oxford Dictionary* defined evangelism as 'the preaching or promulgation of the gospel' (Brown 1993: 863), but a secular organization also has its own 'gospel'—in the sense that it believes its values are 'universal', and need to be spread throughout the world.

However, the degree to which each NGO respects difference in relation to local community values, in other words, the degree to which it supports a pluralism of values

varies considerably. An appreciation of this is helpful in identifying the nuanced understanding of the 'civilizing mission'. For example, JHF and the Army perceived the relationship between Christianity and other religions differently. JHF's evangelism is more a fundamental one. Its sense of the superiority of Christianity over other religions was observable. As a result, JHF completely failed to recognize the importance of Tibetan Buddhism. In contrast, the Army had a more liberal understanding of the importance of inter-religious dialogue, and the superiority of Christianity over other religions does not feature prominently in its discourse or activities. The case studies have provided an in-depth understanding of the differences between the two approaches to Christian evangelism, within an inter-religious context. At the other extreme, Oxfam secularized its values at the time of its establishment, and today its values are linked directly to a rights-based approach to development, which in turn is related to its emphasis on the importance of participation and gender equality. Oxfam was emphatic about local diversity as one of its values.

However, in reflecting on the above finding, it becomes apparent that simply examining the degree to which NGOs are committed to evangelism as a means of assessing the 'civilizing' tendency of NGO activities in China is not sufficient. While all three NGOs believe in the superiority of their values, in the sense that their values and activities can bring something better to people of other religions and to poor people, the degree to which each organization respects the different values of the local communities and is therefore more tolerant of pluralism is a more important marker of 'civilizing' intent.

It is, however, important that a degree of respect for difference between the values of the secular NGO and the local communities are not taken as given. Oxfam happens to be a secular NGO that focuses on local diversity, but this does not mean that all secular NGOs profess or display a high degree of respect for differences in values. Testing this kind of generalization would require an in-depth comparative analysis of various secular NGOs working in China, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. What is very important in relation to the case studies presented in this thesis is that there is variation in the degree to which the international NGOs respect difference both between religious NGOs and between religious and secular NGOs.

The Reformulation of Identity in Mainland China?

An expectation set out at the beginning of this thesis was that it would be necessary for today's international religious agencies conducting project activity in Communist China to alter their religious values and beliefs, or to disguise their values and beliefs in implementing their 'development' projects. My investigations, however, have revealed that this is not the case in practice. As Part Two of this thesis made clear, JHF and Oxfam did not reformulate their identity in China. They have maintained their identity, and attempted to promote this identity in practice when designing their projects in mainland China.

The personnel and financial relations of JHF revealed a limited change in identity. JHF's identity in mainland China was very much related to its Christian evangelical nature. Its development project was designed in a manner that appeared similar to secular projects, but the emphasis on an 'holistic approach', which stresses the combination of spiritual and physical aspects in health, was important. JHF attempted to share Biblical values with the local people and to introduce them to Jesus Christ.

Oxfam tries to make political calculations in relation to what it can do in mainland China. However it still places a strong emphasis on its rights-based approach to development, something the Chinese government is not necessarily keen on. Oxfam has to adjust its expression and adopt a softer approach to development because of China's authoritarian system. However, this does not really represent a reformulation of identity. It may be a superficial accommodating adjustment, but its fundamental identity remains the same.

In contrast, The Salvation Army openly proclaims that it is a Christian organization, and some of its staff members in mainland China wear the Army uniform when they undertake projects. Yet, the Army has also reformulated its identity in mainland China in significant ways. This is evident from the point of view of personnel and financial relations as well as that of the design of actual projects. 'Presence evangelism' was emphasized outside mainland China, but was expressed in the design of the projects undertaken in mainland China in extremely subtle ways. The Salvation Army reformulated its identity in mainland China, but those who work for the Army outside mainland China still see the religious values in leaving the Army shield mark on project sites.

What these three NGOs have in common is that they translate their values into more subtle contexts. However, this does not contradict their identity. Nor does it mean

that they disguise their evangelical identity to suit the situation in China. On the contrary, they are very much open about what they do in China. What makes maintaining their identity possible is the acute difference in perceptions between NGOs and the Chinese government in relation to how the projects undertaken by the NGOs relate to their own values.

In sum, it is important to acknowledge the important historical change in the presentation of religious values. Today's international religious agencies present their religious values in more subtle ways than did their historical counterparts. In the past, the Christian missionaries espoused their particular religious values in the ethnic communities more directly, whereas today's Christian NGOs do so in more subtle ways. This finding is not particularly surprising given the Communist government's strict control over the conduct of international religious NGOs. It is, however, important to acknowledge that these organizations still attempt to promote their religious and secular values among ethnic communities; but they do so in such ways as to bring their activity into close conformity with Chinese government regulations.

To promote their values, international religious agencies depend increasingly on the use of religious symbolism, on demonstrations of the 'love of God' by way of helping ethnic communities, and on modelling themselves on the practices and philosophies of Jesus Christ. Christian missionaries did so too, but the dependency on these as a means of promoting religious values has increased over time.

Interactions with Ethnic Communities

Chapters Three to Six have analyzed the responses of ethnic community members to externally generated values, belief and activities by means of the three frames of interaction. This section firstly undertakes a comparative analysis of the contemporary NGOs. Specifically, it discusses the responses of the ethnic community member to religious values and then explores the responses to secular values and project content in general. This section secondly undertakes an historical comparison.

Contemporary Interactions

As mentioned above, the fact that international religious NGOs are able to express their religious values only in subtle ways leads to some difficulty in their promotion. Most ethnic community members do not even realize that the NGOs are attempting to evangelize them. Contrary to any expectation that the Christian beliefs of the

international religious NGOs are a significant issue for the ethnic communities they engage with, the case studies in this thesis revealed that the extent to which ethnic community members even comprehend the religious nature of the Christian NGOs working in their communities is negligible at best. Therefore, the frames of interaction could not be used to discuss the response of ethnic community members to NGOs' religious values. What was presupposed in the frames of interaction was that ethnic communities recognized externally generated values and activities. However, as mentioned earlier, the expression of religious values was so subtle that ethnic community members were not aware of them, nor were they able to appreciate them as religious values.

For this reason, the three frames of interaction have been revealed to be less than adequate to the task of assessing the responses of ethnic community members to religious values in the contemporary context. The three frames of interaction presupposed that ethnic communities recognized externally generated values and activity. However, in the contemporary context, ethnic community members were not able to recognize the specific religious values embedded in the activity of the international religious NGOs.

Nevertheless, there are important exceptions to this. The story of the widow in JHF's project indicates that religious actors can make a significant difference for individuals, based on such Biblical values as compassion and care. The widow might not recognize that the way in which the JHF project coordinator interacted with her was based on Biblical values. However, she did appreciate the compassion and care shown by the JHF coordinator. Also, one of the components of The Salvation Army's 'presence evangelism'—'Hand to Man'—was much appreciated by ethnic community members. Although it is questionable whether these community members appreciated it as a part of the Army's 'presence evangelism', they appreciated it as 'kindness', which is not irrelevant to the practice of their religious belief, or the practice of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Other types of interaction were observed by use of the three frames of interaction. The following four interactions reflected the features of the conflict frame. The first was the interaction between JHF and the 'local young men' who could not participate in JHF's health training project. The second was the interaction between The Salvation Army and ethnic community members who did not participate in the Army's health training project. The third was the interaction between Oxfam HK and the Laba VC members. The fourth was the interaction between Oxfam HK and the Dabanli NV

community members. Common to all four was the fact that the international NGOs did not attempt to engage with those ethnic community members.

The following three interactions reflected the features of the adaptation frame. The first was the interaction between JHF and participants in JHF's health training project. The second was the interaction between The Salvation Army and participants of the health training project. The third was the interaction between Oxfam HK and Dalaba NV community members. Common to all three was the fact that the international NGOs did attempt to engage with the members of those ethnic communities.

However, even in the adaptation frame, it should be underscored that pre-existing values and social practices in the ethnic communities hampered penetration by externally generated project content and NGO values. Whether such values and practices eventually take root in the community is an interesting question. For example, the attitude of the women in Dalaba NV changed measurably, but the change did not mean that the concept of gender equality was transferred completely. The existing gender relations in Dalaba NV proved able to resist the ideal value of gender equality. By way of another example, the health training projects of JHF and the Army were both well received by those who participated in them but it will take some time for the good health practices inculcated to become habitual.

To gain a more nuanced understanding of the conflict frame, it is important to discuss how the conflict frame and the adaptation frame overlap. There is in fact a fine line distinguishing one from the other. The fine line was noted in all three chapters, specifically in relation to in-depth dialogue that took place between the international agencies and their preferred communities. The dialogue enabled the members of the preferred community to choose to respond to the external ideology relatively voluntarily, rather than as a consequence of coercion. The key to the in-depth dialogue was the role of an intermediary such as the local project coordinator. Although The Salvation Army's senior officers are also Christians, in actual fact its projects have been run by the local coordinator who is also a local government official, and who is, by definition, an atheist. In the Army's case, it was the local project coordinator who closely communicated with the local villagers, and who guided local need. In contrast to the way the Army allowed a local government official to implement its projects, JHF prevented Chinese local government officials from taking sole leadership in the absence of JHF staff members. Adhering to religious values at the local level is preventing JHF from interacting with ethnic communities in the adaptation frame. Oxfam used local Programme Officers, and they communicated to a large extent with the villagers.

In short, dialogue is what distinguished the adaptation frame from the conflict frame. Dialogue affected local perceptions of a project, especially in relation to whether local villagers perceived a project as deriving from 'local needs' (even though the international NGOs may have generated the idea of what ultimately constituted 'local need'), or as having been imposed on them by the international NGOs. As shown in the chapters on JHF and the Army, the originator of an idea was not a key determinant of the conflict frame and adaptation frame. As long as the international NGOs and the ethnic community members engaged in dialogue, and the needs of villagers were 'guided' in the course of the dialogue, the response of the ethnic community members reflected the features of the adaptation frame. Villagers at the Army's project site did not perceive the project as an imposition of values. However, in JHF's case, insufficient communication between JHF staff members, and the villagers, village leaders and government officials, led to a situation in which the villagers and the village leaders did not understand why JHF did something that was not wanted by the villagers.

Dialogue takes place between international religious agencies and the members of a preferred community. In contrast, dialogue does not take place between international agencies and members of a *downplayed* community. It was often difficult for an agency to promote its values and project contents in an overlooked community. All of the case study NGOs commonly overlooked the multiplicity of communities. They preferred a particular community, while downplaying other communities, and regarded the preferred community as *the* community. However, the preferred communities were only one among the multiple communities that existed in the villages. Other communities were downplayed or overlooked by the NGOs. Specifically, JHF preferred a community centred on an administrative natural village, while it downplayed a community centred on Tibetan religious beliefs. The Army preferred a community centred on an administrative village, while it downplayed a community centred on Christian religious beliefs. Oxfam preferred a community centred on a natural village practising its Christian religious beliefs, while downplaying a community centred on an administrative village.

Dialogue was possible when the international religious NGOs engaged with each of the multiple communities. The international NGOs did so in relation to some communities, but not in relation to others. It is particularly important to engage with the communities with which community members identify most strongly. Such communities are often religiously-oriented ones. In a nutshell, all the case study NGOs prefer communities that, in particular, (1) suit the values of the agency and (2) favour

the political status of the agency in China. In the course of preferring one community over another, international agencies downplay the importance of other communities (whether intentionally or not), particularly communities based on the religious beliefs of local people. Such *downplayed* communities often make it difficult for international NGOs to achieve their objective; that is, the spreading of their values among the villagers. It should be noted that the selective engagement of the international religious agencies in ethnic communities is also highly relevant to the work undertaken by the case-study secular agency.

Finally, interaction reflecting the features of the middle ground frame was observed only in the case of Oxfam. The interaction of Oxfam and the member of the Dalaba NV community not only reflected the features of the adaptation frame, but also developed further and came to reflect the features of the middle ground frame. The interaction led to unintended consequences for both Oxfam HK and the ethnic community members. From Oxfam's point of view, Oxfam engaged with the pre-existing social relationships in the community, based on the community's Christianity. Oxfam is a secular agency but its values changed in the process of interaction. From the point of view of the ethnic community, the interaction led to the reinforcing of the religious identity of the ethnic community members, by utilizing their religious network to implement the CO project.

An important question to be asked is why interactions between the Army and JHF and the ethnic communities did not reflect the features of the middle ground frame. This relates to the common fact that both NGOs preferred politically created communities, namely the administrative villages. They both downplayed local pre-existing community identity. This suggests the difference between the two types of agency lies in the way the international secular NGO and ethnic communities interact. The international secular NGO made more of an effort to engage with religiously oriented ethnic communities when necessary, even though such engagement may be inconsistent with their own secular values. This contrasts with the fact that the case-study international religious NGOs, both due to sensitivities about religious work in China and because of lack of alignment of religious beliefs, did not engage with religiously-oriented ethnic communities.

Now that I have analyzed the interactions between international NGOs and ethnic communities in the *contemporary* context, what follows is an analysis of the *historical* change and continuity in local interactions. By identifying the common features in the past and the present, this thesis seeks to refine the frames of interaction. These frames,

as presented in Chapter One, represent the different kinds of responses of ethnic community members to the values, beliefs and activities of international religious agencies, and the different kinds of interaction have on ethnic communities. In setting up the frames of interaction, Chapter One deliberately left open the responses of the international religious agencies to the ethnic communities. What follows identifies patterns in the way international religious agencies have responded to ethnic communities in each frame, and adds these patterns to the definitive features of the relevant frame of interaction.

Continuity in the Interactions: 'Frames of Interaction' Revisited

The first continuity relates to the way international religious agencies *selectively engage* with ethnic communities. Zeroing in on a particular village in China, each of the empirical chapters identified the coexistence of multiple and overlapping communities. Yet all historical and contemporary international religious agencies examined in this thesis preferred communities that, in particular, suited the values of the agency in China. A consequence of this is that the international religious agencies tended to downplay the importance of other communities in any given village. The interaction between an international religious agency and a 'preferred community' is likely to reflect the features of the adaptation frame. On the contrary, the interaction between an international religious agency and a 'downplayed community' is likely to reflect the features of the conflict frame. This suggests the argument that the key to avoiding the conflict frame of interaction is to engage with *multiple* communities within a village.

In Chapter One, the definitive features of the conflict and adaptation frames included the way ethnic community members responded to the values, beliefs and activities of international religious agencies. The features of the conflict frame included a response by the members of an ethnic community in conscious disagreement with the values and activities of the international religious agencies, or with the very existence of the mission itself. The features of the adaptation frame included reaching a consensus over such values and activities. In reconsidering the definitive features of these frames from the responses of international religious agencies, *engagement* with ethnic communities is the key to distinguishing the conflict frame from the adaptation frame.

Ultimately there was little more than a fine line between the conflict frame and the adaptation frame, a line drawn as a result of an attempt by an international religious agency to engage with an ethnic community. When international religious agencies do

not have close dialogue with ethnic communities, the features of the interaction between the two tend to fit into the conflict frame. Much of the literature on international relations assumes a lack of dialogue in relation to the 'civilizing mission'. On the contrary, when international religious agencies *do* have close dialogue with ethnic communities, in the interaction between the two there tend to emerge the features of the adaptation frame. The possibility of dialogue is the first key dimension that has been neglected in the simplistic idea of the 'civilizing mission' as the imposition of values and beliefs.

The second continuity relates to the middle ground frame. The interaction of an international religious agency and an ethnic community in the adaptation frame can develop into a more mature relationship, which can be understood through the middle ground frame. In this relationship, the impact of the interaction is not limited to what the international religious agency expects at the outset. Rather, interaction leads to unintended consequences, for example to a greater awareness among the members of the ethnic community of themselves as a community. The spreading of its values by an international religious agency leads not necessarily to the weakening of identity in an ethnic community, but to the strengthening thereof. In this frame, an international religious agency tends to *indigenize*, in the sense that it changes its values and activities to suit local contexts. This thesis provided two examples of indigenization. The first, in Chapter Three, discussed the missionary Samuel Pollard, who indigenized his values and activity in the local Miao context. This process involved a shift from the mere evangelizing of local people to not only creating the Miao written script that led to the strengthening of Miao ethnic identity but also to helping the Miao to seek recognition of their ethnic identity by the Republic of China. The second example of indigenization, as Chapter Six demonstrated, was when Oxfam HK, a secular organization, utilized a local religious network, which does not necessarily accord with Oxfam HK's secular identity. The indigenization of international religious agencies is the key to a much more mature relationship between the agencies and the ethnic communities. This is helpful in gaining a more nuanced and deeper understanding of the civilizing mission. Only the middle ground frame can enable us to understand fully the impact of such an encounter on community identity.

Such patterns of international religious agencies' response in each frame, historically and contemporarily, lead to the main argument of this thesis: the extent to which an international religious agency engages with ethnic communities is the key to gaining a more nuanced understanding of the idea of the 'civilizing mission' over time.

Contrary to an underlying assumption in the literature, which argues for an understanding of the imposition of values as a way of assessing the nature of the 'civilizing mission', this thesis argues that one needs to look at the other side of the coin. In other words, we need to assess the 'civilizing mission' from the perspective of 'engagement'.

In sum, two issues are particularly important. First, even in the case where an international religious agency has 'imposed' its values and activities, these can be well received by ethnic communities. Second, and interrelated, a positive response from ethnic communities generated through a process of engagement can lead, in turn, tu positive unintended consequences such as the self-realization of the ethnic community. It is important to stress that the encounter with religion does not necessarily lead to a weakening of ethnic identity.

Implications of This Thesis

The above understanding of the 'civilizing mission' has important implications for the relevant literature in the following three ways. First, identifying the fine line between conflict and adaptation from a local perspective may add an interesting perspective to the encounter between China and the West. This thesis provides a practical perspective on the theoretical discussion of universalism and relativism in China's international relations. The debate about actual interactions does not necessarily have to be cast in relation to the dichotomized and fixed understanding of the two '*isms*'. An international agency may believe in the universal nature of its own values, but this does not necessarily comply with a completely dichotomized idea of universalism and relativism. To discuss the way in which the universal nature of values can transcend space, a focus on engagement through dialogue with overlapping multiple communities is extremely important, because a dialogue can lead to a change in the perceptions of a local community.

The second implication of this thesis is for our understanding of the civilizational encounter. Civilizational encounters include those between religion and secularism. Secularism can be understood as one among a number of civilizational identities (Madsen and Strong 2002). Several studies deal with the question of how religion and secularism can coexist in the contemporary world (Madsen and Strong 2002; Anhelm 1999; AnNa'im 2002; Keane 2002).

Anhelm (1999) and AnNa'im (2002) attempt to discover the path to avoid the clash between global civil society and religion and seek coexistence between the two. Anhelm (1999: 97) argues that 'the conditions under which religious communities can become a positive, productive factor are that they keep their ability to discover the dialogue with other religious communities and the world, through the lay involvement'. AnNa'im (2002) attempts to construct the view that global civil society and religion can be mutually supportive, and emphasizes that both religious communities and global civil society have responsibility for reaching an 'overlapping consensus' between the two. This overlapping consensus, he argues, is reached through concrete dialogue. He (2002: 58-59) suggests that it is necessary:

> to mediate the tension between the presumed exclusivity of religious communities and their tendency to strictly enforce narrowly defined moral codes, on the one hand, and the requirements of inclusion, civility, and freedom of choice of civil society, on the other hand.... The mediation of this tension can happen through an internal discourse within religious communities and simultaneous dialogue with other constituencies.

My thesis resonates with the emphasis of Anhelm (1999) and AnNa'im (2002) on the importance of dialogue, and identifies particular ways international religious agencies are able to maintain dialogue with ethnic communities in China. It is my contention that both secular and religious agencies can significantly contribute to development in China. However, to do so requires an in-depth understanding of local communities on the basis of anthropological knowledge, and an open-minded attitude to different values and religions. The activities of international agencies, both religious and secular, need to move beyond the idea of the 'civilizing mission' insofar as it causes 'conflict', by engaging in dialogue with a variety of local communities. This thesis also attempts to move away from the dichotomy of religion and secularism, by suggesting that both religious and secular agencies can share in the belief that their values can bring something better to others.

An analysis of civilizational encounters from a local perspective is essential, because different civilizational identities are not necessarily incompatible in practice. The key to attaining the greatest degree of compatibility lies in a *two-way learning process*. Explicitly, international agencies that espouse universal values can learn from diverse local contexts. At the same time, ethnic communities can learn and indeed adapt to the values promoted by international agencies. This argument has its twin in what John Keane (2003: 205) has referred to as 'the art of learning through exposure to others – imparative reasoning'. 'Imparative' comes, he suggests, from *imparare* in Latin,

meaning 'learning through interaction with others who are different' to take place. Engagement through dialogue creates an opportunity for two-way learning; that is, for the art of learning through interaction with others who are different. It is in this way that both international religious agencies and ethnic communities are able to exert a positive influence on each other. The future of international religious agencies, and the potential positive impact they may have on local communities, really lies in the extent to which they can engage overlapping communities in a meaningful dialogue.

The third implication of this thesis is for increasing our empirical knowledge of ethnic communities in China and their encounter with the 'West'. This thesis has brought to bear in-depth empirical evidence that religion is often one of the more important factors in transforming ethnic communities in the investigated areas. The encounters of these communities with international religious agencies have not necessarily led to the weakening of ethnic identity. This study, therefore, reinforces the arguments of some historical anthropologists in relation to the historical interaction between ethnic communities and outsiders (Harrell 1995; Cheung 1995; Tapp 1989). The implication of this thesis is that their argument is applicable to the contemporary setting as well. Community identity based on local religion has endured even when it has encountered the 'West'.

The history of the encounter between China and the West is extremely complex. The extent to which the encounter has changed China's ethnic communities is not properly explained in the literature. However, this thesis has focused a spotlight on one of the enduring aspects of the encounter with international religious agencies, an aspect that has been neglected in the literature. The fact that such encounters can throw up features of any of the three frames of interaction—conflict, adaptation and middle ground—in both the historical and the contemporary periods implies that ethnic communities in China have had the ability to endure exposure to universal values.

The scope of activities conducted by international religious agencies has been expanding. Their attempts to promote so-called 'universal values' also provides a potential opportunity to engage in in-depth dialogue with local communities. At present, it is difficult for international religious agencies to engage with Chinese religious communities, because of the political sensitivity surrounding religion in China. A second constraining factor is the lack of respect for different religions. The hope is that religious tolerance in China will strengthen over time. In the meantime, it is vitally important that international agencies are able to demonstrate the importance of religious tolerance and pluralism through their engagement with local communities. This can be

best achieved by engaging in a dialogue which stresses the importance of learning through interaction with those who have different values and beliefs.

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Yunnan

Programme Officer, Oxfam Hong Kong, in Kunming, 11 November 2003.

Church Minister, in Dalaba NV, in Muga Township, 18 November 2003.

Muga Township government official, in Muga Township, 19 November 2003.

Villagers' Committee members in Dalaba NV, in Muga Township, 18 November 2003.

Acting Regional Co-ordinator in Southwest Regional Office, The Salvation Army, in Kunming, 19 November 2004.

A villager of Fangmaba Village, in Zhaotong, 25 November 2005.

Local Project Coordinator of The Salvation Army (Official of Poverty Alleviation Office of Zhaoyang District Government), in Zhaotong, 26 November 2004.

Fangmaba Administrative Village Head, in Zhaotong, 27 November 2004.

Hong Kong

International Director of the Jian Hua Foundation, 2 December 2004.

Japanese Programs' Coordinator and Coordinator for Short-term Programs, Jian Hua Foundation, 2 December 2004.

A founder (a) of the Jian Hua Foundation, 13 December 2005.

A founder (b) of the Jian Hua Foundation, 7 and 17 December 2005, and 5 May 2006.

The Director of Finance and Operations, Jian Hua Foundation, 12 December 2005.

Chairman of JHF International Board, 13 December 2005.

A former China Programme Manager and a current Policy Advisor–Gender Equity, Oxfam Hong Kong, 16 December 2005.

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The Officer Commanding The Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, 16 December 2005.

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Regional Manager, East Asia, Oxfam Australia, in Melbourne, 19 December 2005.

Manager of NGO Program, Community Programs Section, AusAID, in Canberra, 18 January 2006.

Officer of Overseas Services, The Salvation Army Australian Eastern Territory, in Sydney, 22 February 2006.

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